+ NIGHT RANGER | FOGHAT | BERNIE TAUPIN | GILES MARTIN | BILL MUMY

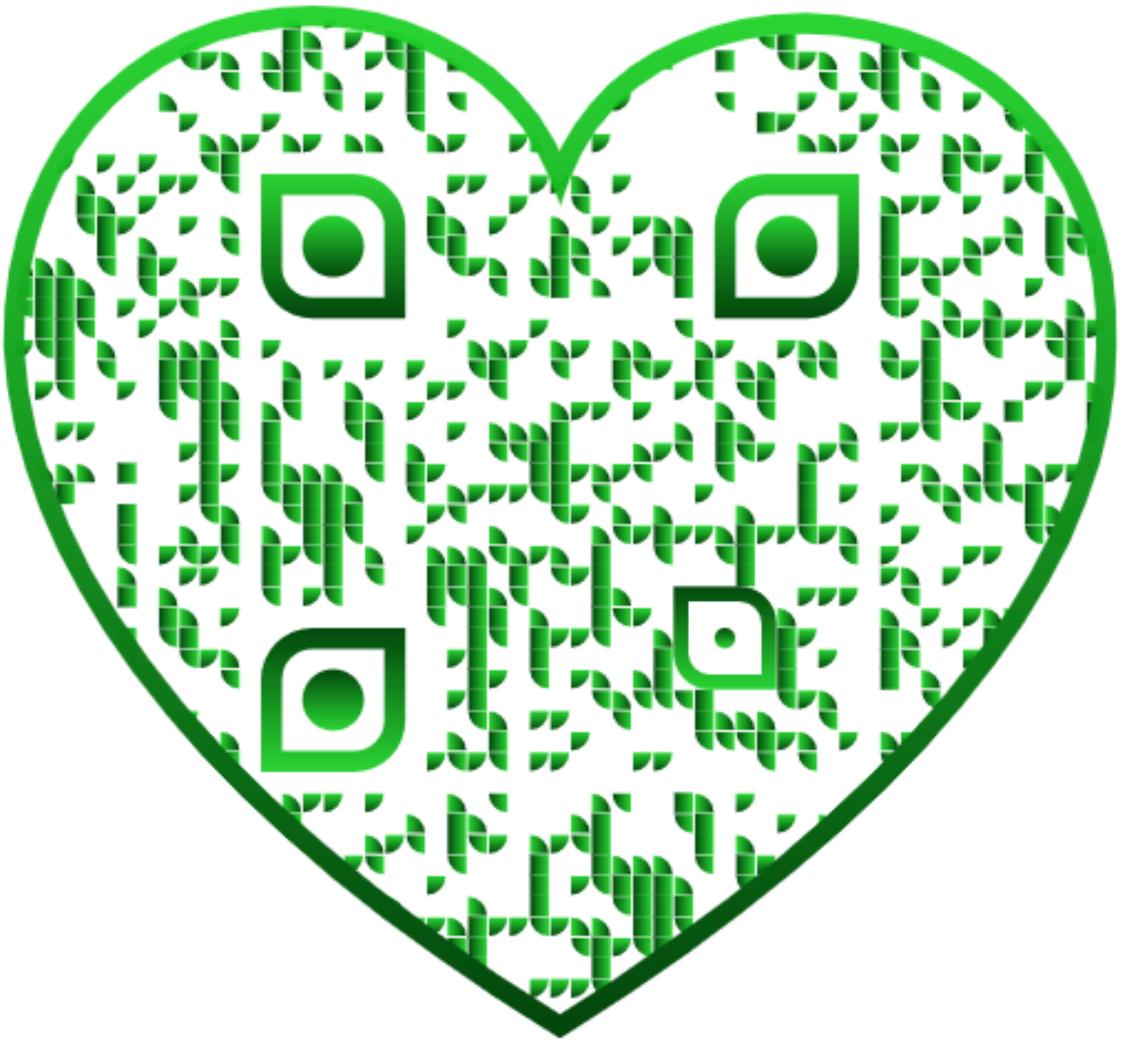
GOLDMINE

THE MUSIC COLLECTOR'S MAGAZINE

GOLDMINEMAG.COM WINTER 2023

THE BEATLES

NOW AND THEN



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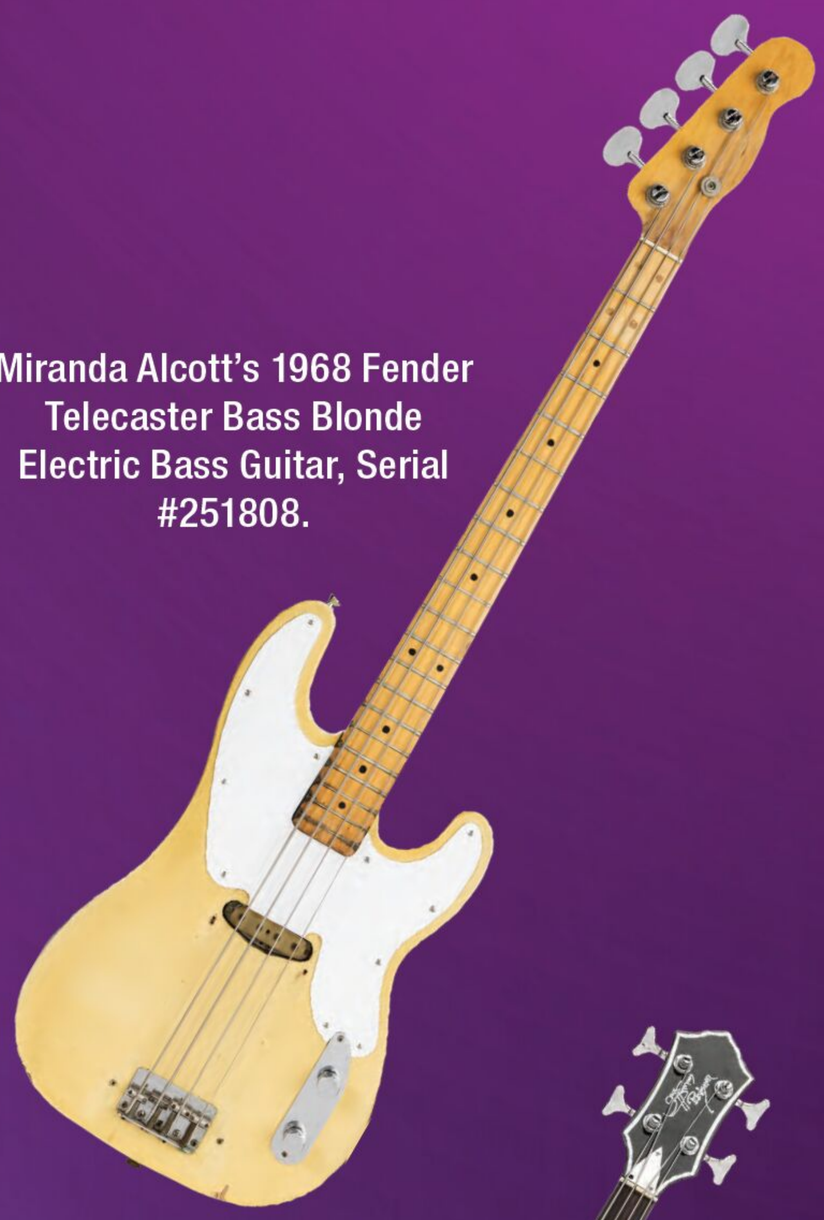
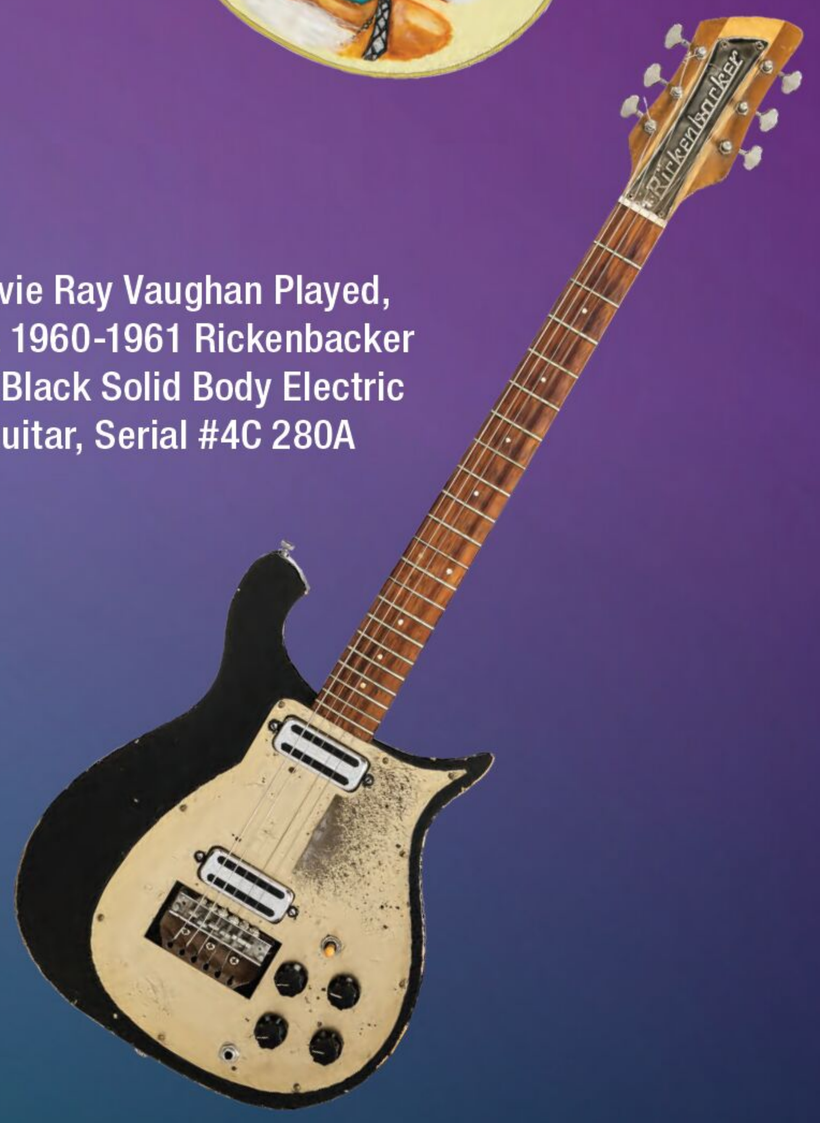
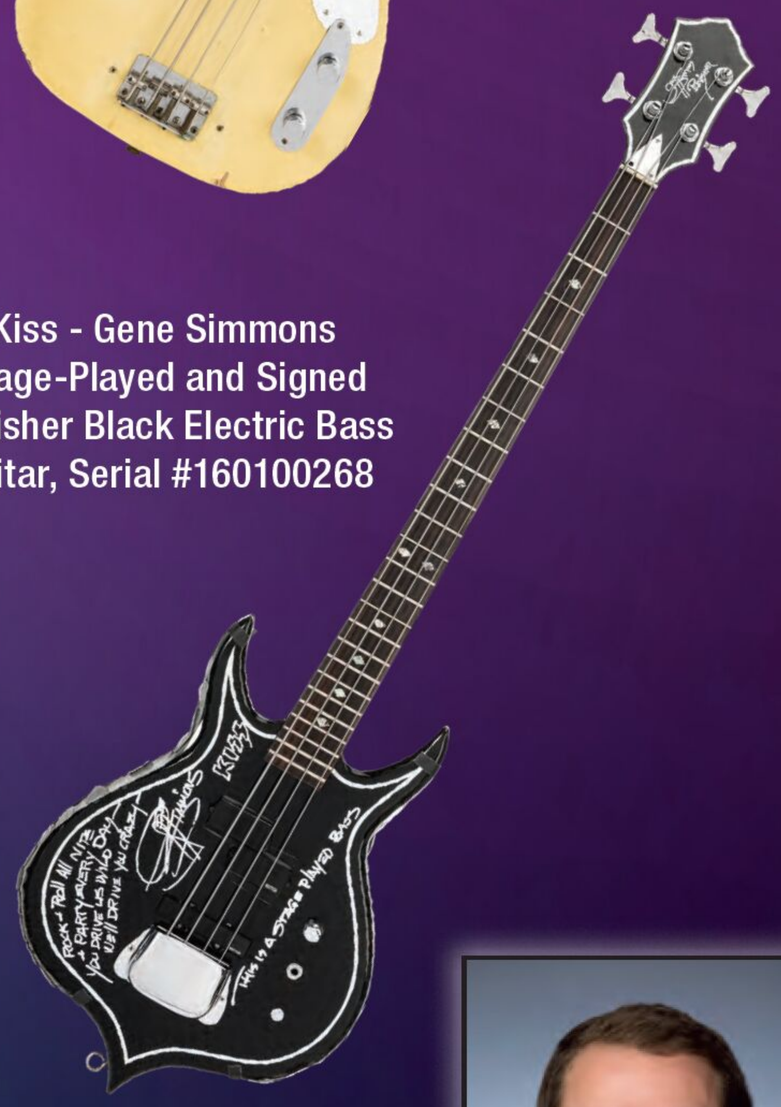


Miranda Alcott's 1968 Fender Telecaster Bass Blonde Electric Bass Guitar, Serial #251808.

1956-1958 Fender Tremolux Tweed Guitar Amplifier, Serial #00502



Stevie Ray Vaughan Played, circa 1960-1961 Rickenbacker 450 Black Solid Body Electric Guitar, Serial #4C 280A



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“It’s not a Beatles tribute record, it’s a Beatles record.”

— PRODUCER GILES MARTIN ON “NOW AND THEN”

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THE BEATLES RELEASE THEIR LAST SONG WITH “NOW AND THEN”

The Beatles during a photo session in Paris, February 1964

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When we started this band, I couldn't imagine myself 40 years later playing these songs, period. But here we are, playing for crowds that keep getting bigger.

— JACK BLADES

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MASA DOI

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EDITOR'S NOTE

IT MAKES TOTAL SENSE to assign a rock photographer to interview another rock photographer. They are both on the same wavelength. There are things that professional photographers focus on that no one with an iPhone camera can even comprehend. In this issue, photog Ivor Levene interviews Frank Stefanko, who has made a wonderful career capturing the aura of Bruce Springsteen. Stefanko has taken two seminal album covers for Bruce — *Darkness on the Edge of Town* and *The River* — and has published two books on his visual bond with The Boss. Along with the intriguing cover feature, we also have a collector's edition of this issue where Stefanko provided us with an alternative cover photo and a professional B&W 8x10" print from the *Nebraska* photo shoot.

Photographer Frank Stefanko with Bruce Springsteen in Colts Neck, New Jersey, in 2017. Photograph by Dan Reed.

Besides our Springsteen coverage, we have two other covers for our subscribers: The Beatles and Night Ranger (shown at right). We also have one other collector's edition done on Night Ranger. We hope you enjoy this Winter 2023 edition of *Goldmine*.

— **Patrick Prince**, *Editor*

EXTRA CONTENT

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GOLDMINE

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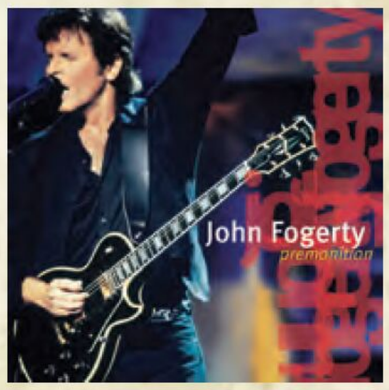

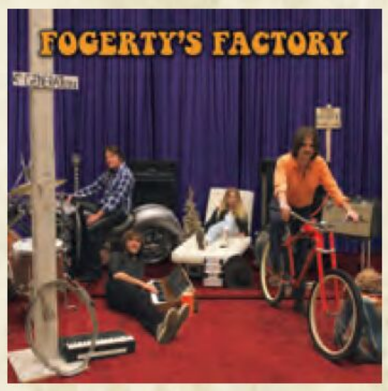

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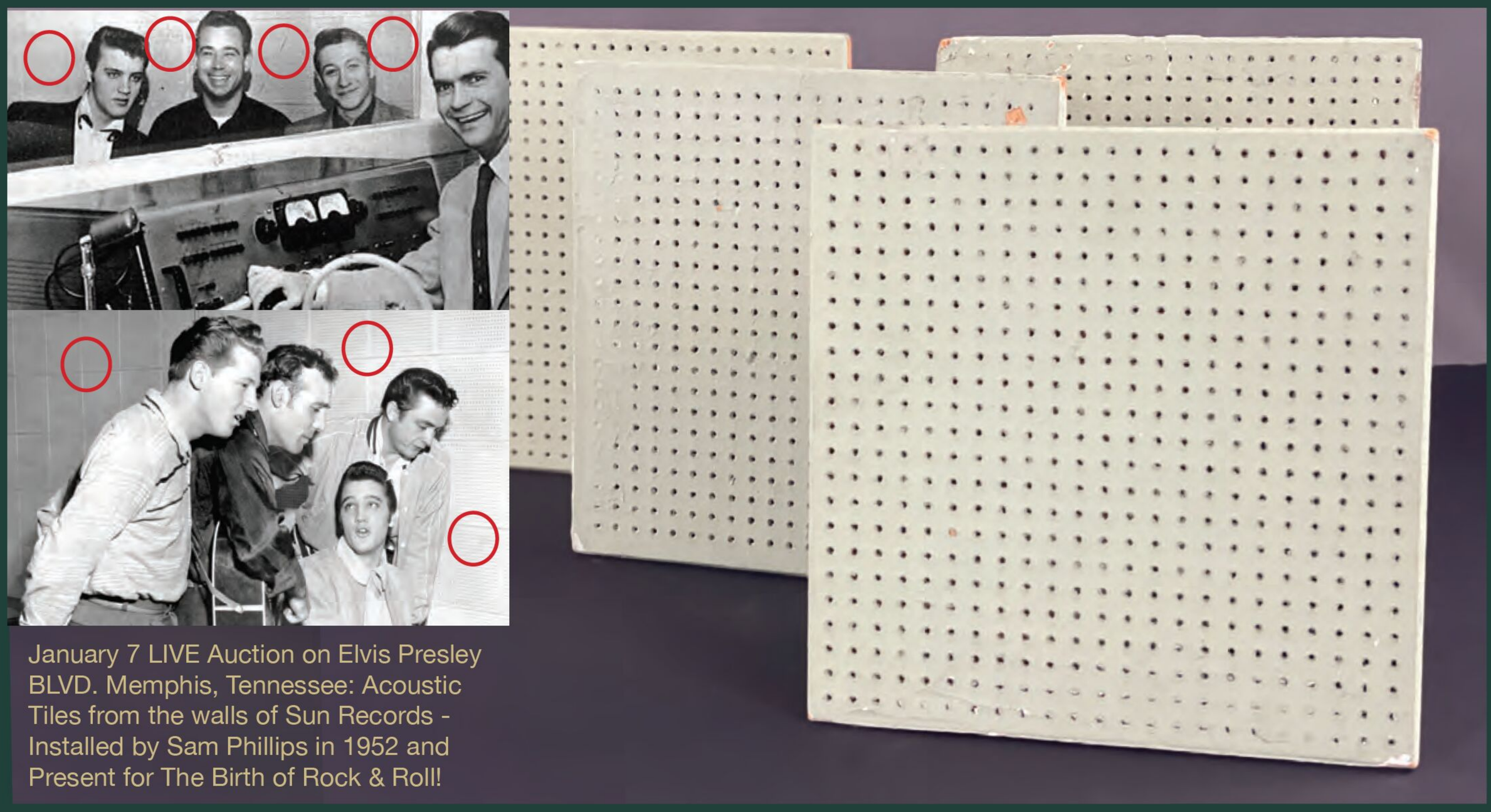

January 7 LIVE Auction on Elvis Presley BLVD. Memphis, Tennessee: Acoustic Tiles from the walls of Sun Records - Installed by Sam Phillips in 1952 and Present for The Birth of Rock & Roll!

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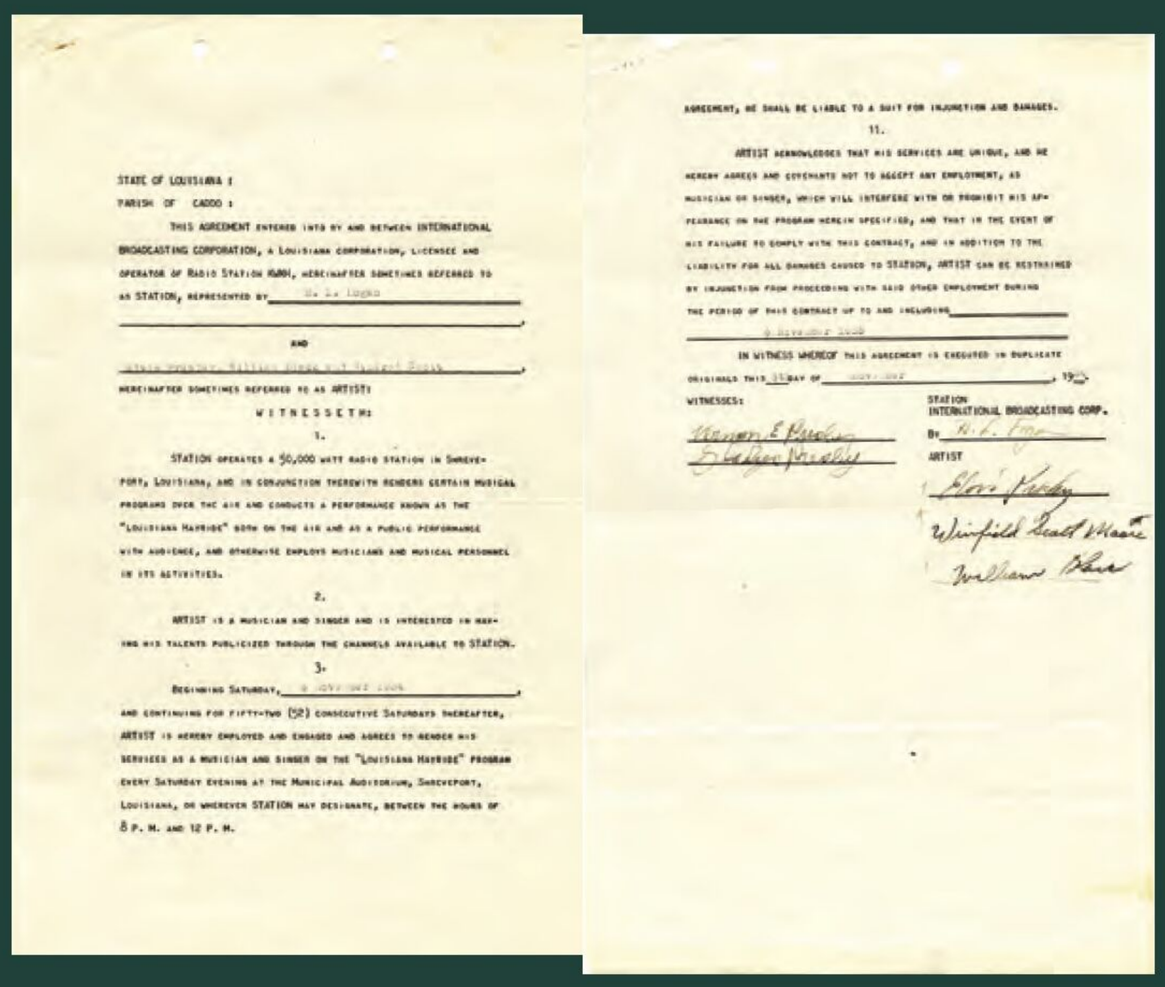

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Elvis Presley, Bailes Black and Scotty Moore

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By H. P. Logan

ARTIST
Elvis Presley
Winfield Scott Moore
William Black

January 7 LIVE Auction on Elvis Presley BLVD. Memphis, TN: One of the Earliest Elvis Presley Performance Contracts - November 6, 1954, *Louisiana Hayride* Contract Signed by Elvis, Scotty Moore and Bill Black

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Paul McCartney XXX
John Lennon XXX
George Harrison XXX

December 15 Rock & Roll Auction: 1963 Beatles Postcard Signed by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrision and Ringo Star on *Thank Your Lucky Stars* BBC TV Show

GROOVES

GETTING TO THE HEART OF MUSIC COLLECTING

SPIN CYCLE

BY DAVE THOMPSON

Amidst all the kerfuffle surrounding the 50th anniversary of *that* Pink Floyd album (and just two years to go before we do it all again for *Wish You Were Here*), it's refreshing to know that not everybody has fallen beneath its spell.

There is, for example, a first-time reissue for the late **Richard Wright**'s *Wet Dream* (Parlophone, shown above), an album released to almost zero fanfare in 1978, but which has deservedly grown in stature in the years since then. Blue marbled vinyl and a double-sided poster will doubtless thrill the vinyl collectors, but for anyone wanting to go the whole hog, there's a 2023 remix by Steven Wilson that has already gathered a plethora of raves ... which isn't always the case, so many similar jobs has he undertaken in recent years, but which in this instance is utterly deserved.

Wet Dream in its original format, always felt... well, a little wet. Underwhelming. Merely pleasant. But, lest we forget, Wright was always a solid songwriter alongside his unimpeachable keyboard duties, and Wilson's mix focuses firmly on the former, letting us see how many absolute nuggets lurked beneath that so unadventurous original production.

Meanwhile, Third Man Vault has gathered together what it calls *The Solo Works of* **Syd Barrett**, a 3-LP box set comprising the *The Madcap Laughs* and *Barrett* LP from 1970, plus *Opel*, the 1988 outtakes collection that dulled the collector demand for more of Syd's music, while not really satisfying any of them.

Across the two original albums, one produced by Roger Waters and David Gilmour, the other featuring Gilmour and Richard Wright among the accompanying players, Barrett's fragile songs and increasingly idiosyncratic songs and performances created two of the most individual LPs in the entire Floyd family tree. *Opel*, on the other, merely played to the gallery of scuttlebutt and rumor that had grown up around Barrett in the years since then, and served even less purpose once a bunch more outtakes were uncorked for 1993's *Crazy Diamond* box. Its reappearance here is nice for (semi-)completists, but could easily have been overlooked in favor of the other odds and ends that have also appeared since that time (the eight-song *Radio One Sessions* album, for example).

The package, nevertheless, is a joy, with colored vinyl to match one song per album — "Golden Hair," "Baby Lemonade" and "Milky Way"; plus a 7-inch single comprising latter-day Gilmour covers of "Dark Globe" and "Dominoes." The box itself has a stark, but pleasing (if a little Dylanish) drawing

of Barrett on the cover, and a facsimile autograph on the back; the original album packaging is retained throughout, and the sound quality is on a par with any past 21st-century reissue. It's an attractive package all round, then, and like so many other Vault releases (this was #57), it's probably not going to be hanging round for long.

For a band that released just three LPs, the **MC5** made a helluva lot of noise. *Kick Out the Jams, Back in the USA* and *High Time* (all Elektra Records) are among the very building blocks of '70s rock — young, loud and snotty for sure, but also the heralds of a sonic revolution whose reverberations are still being felt today.

A crucial component in the countercultural ferment of the very late 1960s, with John Sinclair the outspoken guru

who flavored their subsequent legend, the MC5 were also a signal influence on everyone from the early '70s underground rockers to the punks of the late decade and after. The Pink Fairies and The Stooges were both built around a love of the '5, and Johnny Thunders was just the first of the axemen who looked to Wayne Kramer for the right to rip up the rule book.

From a collectors' point of view, too, the MC5 are up there, as well. *Kick Out the Jams*, in its uncensored first pressing firm, has sold for as much as $800 in excellent condition, with autographs, white labels and international editions pushing the asking price even higher.

These are not these album's first reissues. In fact, they're not even their first of this century ... or this decade. Sundazed kicked 'em out in 2001, Third Man in 2017 and Elektra have maintained a constant stream of picture discs and 180-gram pressings, alongside several strains of colored vinyl. At best, you could say that these are the first rereleases to arrive in clear and red, clear and yellow, and all-clear wax respectively. Which, if you're aiming to complete a rainbow out of MC5 albums, will push you a little further along your way.

But that in itself reminds us just how important these albums were, to the nature of rock in the '60s and '70s, and to the aspirations that still see kids locking themselves away in the garage and making a godawful noise. Even better, "grown-ups" still seem to hate them.

A 10-legged firestorm, a three-album thunder crash, the MC5 won no awards for virtuosity, and none for major sales. They're not even in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, which makes you wonder whether the powers that be even know what the first words in the name of their ridiculous little boys club even means? If the MC5 aren't rock and roll, what is?

We know what it means, though, and we turn the volume up to 12. You *need* these records.

Considering the disdain with which so many of the early '70s most "serious" bands regarded singles, it's odd to see them turning now to those silly little 7-inchies in search of a new way to attract the collector.

ELP, of course, were the most egregious offenders, with a 12-disc box of 45s that

didn't even care about duplication and miscouplings. But **Yes** are not too far behind, as they treat our ears to *Singles* (Atlantic), a 12-song collection that — OK, we're not talking about the music here — simply reeks of desperation.

Between 1970 and 1983, where this collection cuts off, Yes released 13 singles in the United States, of which 10 are included here. So, no room for "Sweetness," at the beginning of the period, and none for "Run Through the Light" or "It Can Happen" near the end.

In their stead, we get "Sound Chaser," which was a B-side (to "Soon," as if that wasn't sufficient nonsense from the still disappointing *Relayer*) and "Starship Trooper," which was also a B-side, but only in the U.K. — which enjoyed four further singles that are missing from this collection. "Looking Around," "Sweet Dreams," "Time and a Word" and "Going for the One" are the absentees.

Meaning, if the job had been done properly, this could at least have been a double album, or even the first in a series of 7-inch boxes, sensibly arranged by era — *The Good Years, The Dodgy Years* and *The Goodness, Are They Still Going?* Years.

But it wasn't, so let's make the most of it. Side one, at least up until *Relayer*, is more or less flawless, even if the necessary edits make most tracks sound peculiar to those who've only experienced them on LP. Side two, too, shimmers across "Wonderous Stories," while "Don't Kill the Whale' stands out among the band's most immediate and gloriously unhinged offerings ever.

Thereafter, it really depends upon how you feel about the post-*Drama* period, with or without subscribing to the belief that it wasn't really Yes anymore.

The fact that the early 1980s spawned their biggest hit single yet, "Owner of a Lonely Heart," probably won't change your mind on that subject.

So it's a fun compilation and a wry concept, too. But it could have been done so much more comprehensively. Maybe some future Record Store Day will sort things out?

And so to **Devo**, and the bad news is, if you're really serious about experiencing what *50 Years of De-Evolution 1973-2033* (Warner Records), you'll have to target the limited-edition (3,000 copies) 4-LP box set. But, on the other hand, if you just want to grab some Devo, and don't care for the bizarre stuff (OK, the *really* bizarre stuff), the two LP version will suit you fine.

The first half of the former, and the entirety of the latter are identical, a 25-track rampage through Devo's LP catalog from the rerecorded "Warner versions" of "Mongoloid" and "Jocko Homo" back in the mists of time, to 2010's "Fresh" 12-inch. And you take the rough with the smooth, while not really expecting too many surprises. Maybe *this* track has dated a lot better than anticipated, and *that* one a lot worse. But it's Devo, and though "consistency" is scarcely their middle name, at least you know what you're getting.

It's LPs three and four that are the real meat, digging deep into demos, outtakes and one-offs, Booji Boy singles and Stiff records anthems, a few remixes and singles edits, and 1974's "I'm a Potato." Yes, it gets a little wearing in places, as the genuinely weird becomes merely wacky, and the ideas factory closes down a few departments.

And it may or may not please collectors to learn that the *Hardcore* collections of the earliest years are conspicuous by their absence, especially given the scarcity of their vinyl counterparts. But maybe that's a little too much de-evolution for a major-label release. What we do get certainly fills a few gaps on the shelf, though, and it's wrapped in one of the most Devo-esque sleeves we've seen in a long while.

▸▸RECORD STORE RECON BY DR. DISC

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STOCK 9

Add this to a growing list of stores that I would go out of my way to visit. Vinyl Daze has so many different record supplies that most collectors are looking for. In addition, they also carry new and used turntables. And they carry new and used albums and CDs. Yes, they have some amazing store swag, and their shirt designs are unique.

STAFF 10

On the day I was there — and the day I went back for more— the owner was there. Martin Snead opened the store in 2011 as a way to deal with his midlife crisis. There was also one additional staff member there, who was open to helping me find different records in the store and look up items. Martin told me that this is the first store that went vinyl in Virginia Beach.

STORE 9

This store is the best of both worlds. While it is brightly lit and everything is easily sorted, there is so much to look through it's a bit of a crate diggers delight, too. The store had records spinning the whole time I was there, and that adds to the ambience of the store, not overwhelming it.

SELECTION 10

There is not anything that I can say I looked for that I did not find, and the prices are pretty good. They have all styles of music: classic rock, world, jazz, punk, metal, reggae and a whole space dedicated to "yacht rock."

SPECIAL MENTION

Winner of the 2023 Best Record Store in Eastern Virginia award, this store will lighten your wallet. They do participate in RSD and usually have a very big line waiting for them when they open, and if you time it right you might even find Phil Collen from Def Leppard shopping there.

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Steve Hackett

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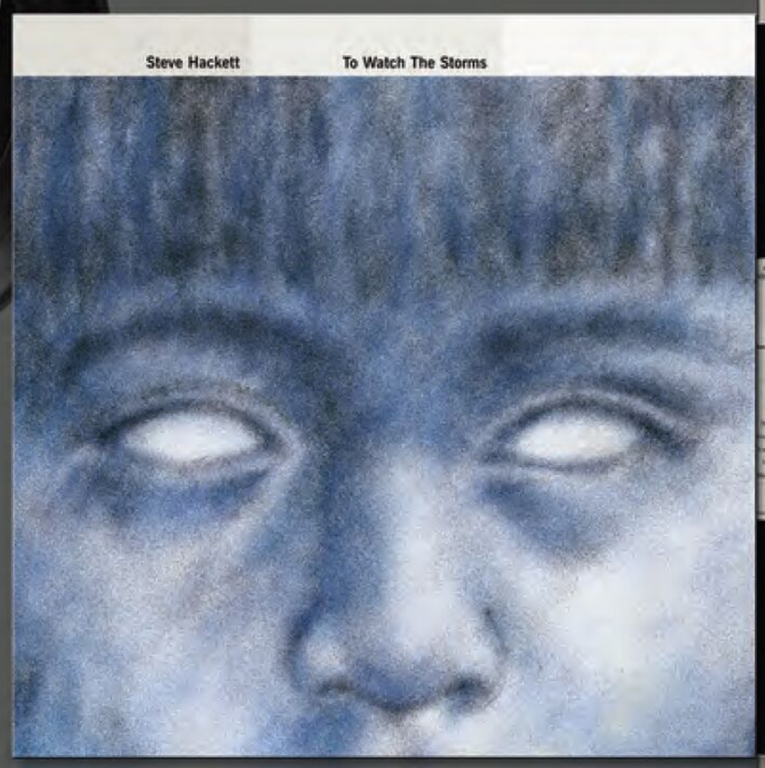


TO WATCH THE STORMS

INSIDE OUT MUSIC

SONY MUSIC

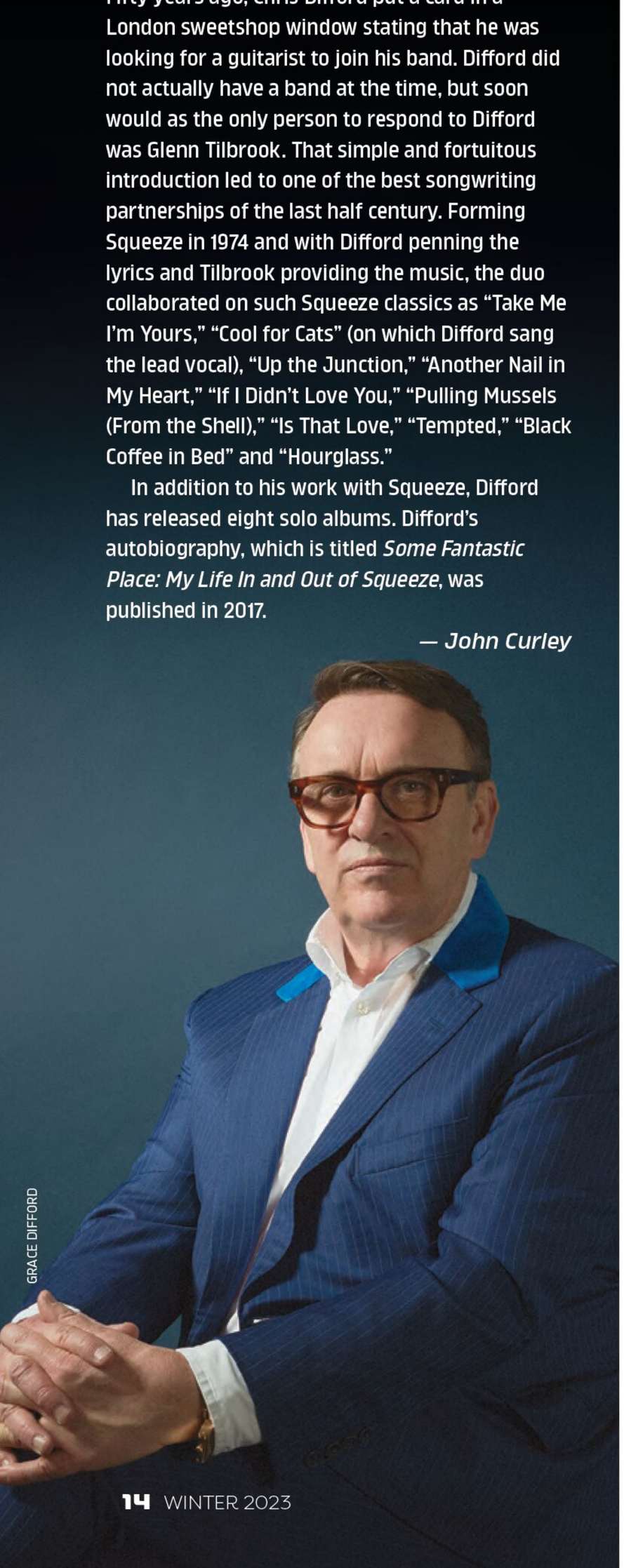
10 ALBUMS THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

CHRIS DIFFORD

Fifty years ago, Chris Difford put a card in a London sweetshop window stating that he was looking for a guitarist to join his band. Difford did not actually have a band at the time, but soon would as the only person to respond to Difford was Glenn Tilbrook. That simple and fortuitous introduction led to one of the best songwriting partnerships of the last half century. Forming Squeeze in 1974 and with Difford penning the lyrics and Tilbrook providing the music, the duo collaborated on such Squeeze classics as "Take Me I'm Yours," "Cool for Cats" (on which Difford sang the lead vocal), "Up the Junction," "Another Nail in My Heart," "If I Didn't Love You," "Pulling Mussels (From the Shell)," "Is That Love," "Tempted," "Black Coffee in Bed" and "Hourglass."

In addition to his work with Squeeze, Difford has released eight solo albums. Difford's autobiography, which is titled *Some Fantastic Place: My Life In and Out of Squeeze*, was published in 2017.

— John Curley



GRACE DIFFORD

The Who, Live At Leeds
I played this album during my exams at school, all of which I failed as I was concentrating on how great it would be to be in a band and play like The Who.

David Bowie, David Bowie (aka *Space Oddity*)
I was hooked on these songs and played the album to all of my mates. They were into prog; I was into songs with deeper meanings.

The Beatles, The Beatles (The White Album)
A record the whole band had parts to play with a sort of best-of solo. I liked that it made for a varied listen. Inspired for a band pulling in so many different directions at the time.

Chris Wood, So Much to Defend
A songwriter with a gift for the word, a man of Kent, a man of great ability to tell a story.

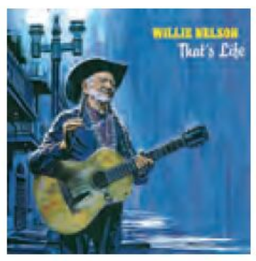
The Allman Brothers Band, At Fillmore East
Possibly the best live album ever recorded. I never tire of hearing a band in full swing sharing the stage in such a poetic and musical way.

Joni Mitchell, Travelogue
A voice to soothe and to embrace, songs that can never be misplaced, a journey into a quiet part of my ear where I can lose myself in love.

Small Faces, Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake
The first album I ever stole from a shop, a story within recordings which I try to trace with my own solo work. A band of amazing talents.

Max Richter, From Sleep
My go-to album when trying to avoid the real world. It brings me to a place of comfort, a world of calm and focus.

Aimee Mann, I'm With Stupid
A songsmith of such wonder and grace. Her lyrics inspire me, and her being is so wonderful. I loved singing with her. I was scared; she calmed me.



Willie Nelson, That's Life
And that is life, a life on the tour bus, a life of many great albums and songs. I don't want to be like Willie in my life, but I admire his voice, his songs and his journey.

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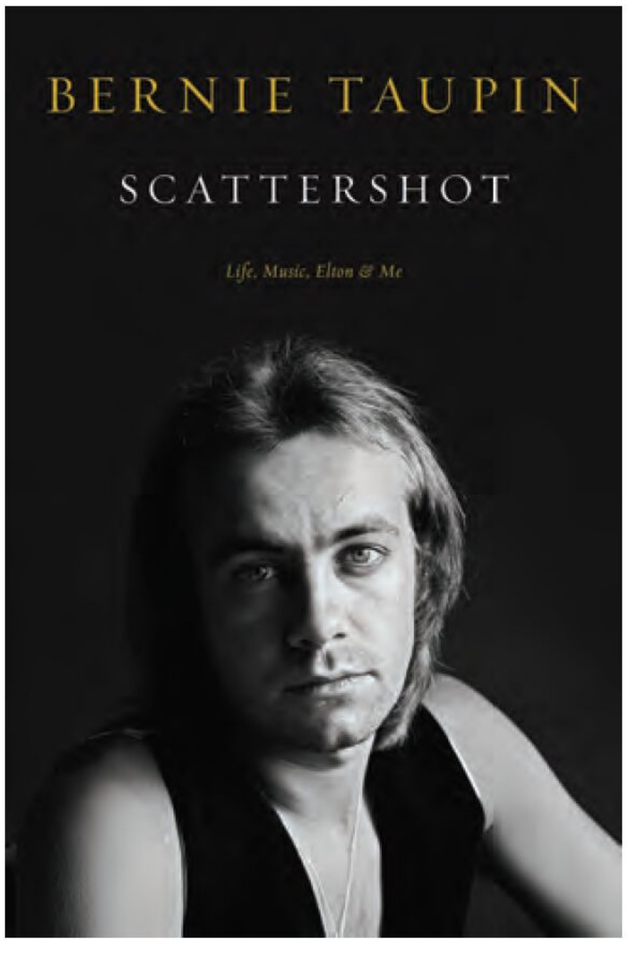
‘WE’RE TOO MUCH IN TUNE WITH EACH OTHER TO GET IN EACH OTHER’S WAY’

BERNIE TAUPIN



MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES

Elton John’s writing partner speaks on his new autobiography.

BY RUSH EVANS

Bernie Taupin has a way with words, but you already knew that. Elton John has famously acknowledged that there would be no songs, no Elton John, if it weren’t for the words that came first.

But Taupin’s way with words far transcends his lyrics. *Scattershot* is his eloquent autobiography, a beautifully written journal of a fascinating life. Being unburdened by a day job since beginning his lyrical journey as a teenager and being spared a life on the rock and roll road, Taupin enjoyed the great luxury of wandering the planet while frequently hanging out with the most colorful characters not all of whom are from the entertainment world.

Taupin explains this portrait: "Not exactly down and out in Paris but looking the part. My stay in the City of Lights during the spring of 1976 ran the gamut of grand allusion and lurid bohemianism."

"More elaborate than a tennis racket in front of the mirror," says Taupin of this childhood photograph. "I get up on a chicken crate and channel Eddie Cochran playing a guitar with no strings!"

BERNIE TAUPIN ARCHIVES

His account of his star-struck encounter with novelist Graham Greene is a demonstration of his own skill as a writer. The greatest demonstration of his lyric writing, of course, comes from the words he's written that are burned into our collective consciousness in a manner transcending that of the great novelists: "Tiny Dancer," "Bennie and the Jets," "Sacrifice," "Your Song," "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me," "I'm Still Standing," "Candle in the Wind," "Rocket Man" and many more. The lyrics of these songs are just the beginning of the staggering number of imagination-fueling words that Taupin wrote for his lifelong writing partner John over the past 55 years.

The individual lines run through our minds, and they're set to beautiful music. Just think of any line from any John song, and you can hear the whole thing instantly. Think of a line as simple as, "Blue-jean baby, L.A. lady, seamstress for the band." Nine words in and your memories, imagination, passion and emotions are off and running. You know the rest from there.

Taupin was born in 1950, grew up in a farming community in rural England, loved literature and words, and answered an ad in *New Musical Express* looking for talent. London's Reg Dwight answered the same ad. One could write words, one could write music, and both parts fit together like a glove. The perfect like-minded musical partnership was born. That was 1967. By 1969, Reg had become Elton, and their first collaborative album was released. Dozens of albums and hundreds of songs followed, along with Grammys, Oscars, halls of fame and a sweet spot in the minds of millions of music lovers. Bernie and Elton wrote and still write music that makes people happy.

Scattershot is not the sequential march through the events of a public musical life. Instead, it's the story of things experienced by its protagonist, someone who just happens to have written all those timeless lyrics. The stories that tumble out onto every page of the book are as riveting as the lyrics, and they include the appropriation of a yellow school bus in Barbados to a physical altercation with John Belushi in L.A., living the cowboy life cutting horses, introducing a nervous Brian Wilson to John Lennon, riding in a car with Stevie Wonder at the wheel and following the yellow brick road as his partner becomes the most famous person on the planet in the 1970s. He's a rambler at the Ramblin' Jack Elliott level, and yes, there's a story in the book about him, too. Taupin has in no way led a boring life.

I began listening to Taupin's words more than half a century ago at age 10. My sister and I got the then-new *Don't Shoot Me I'm Only the Piano Player* album, and we were transfixed. "The Greyhound is swaying, and the radio's playing some blues for baby and me." "Blues for Baby and Me" is still my favorite Elton/Bernie song, so when my phone rang and Taupin was on the other end of the line, I was as star-struck as he had been when he encountered Graham Greene in the bar of London's Savoy Hotel.

And just like Taupin at the Savoy, I had questions.

GOLDMINE: *Your book is like a travelogue, like a series of columns as the journalist explores life sharing the stories he lives along the way. Does it feel like that to you?*

BERNIE TAUPIN: I've been known to refer to the book as my Ulysses, so I guess in a way it's sort of an Odyssey. As I state in the book, I never intended to write something that was linear because I think that would have bored me. And also, I think it just toes the line of the general rock-star biography or autobiography. I didn't want to do it A to Z. My brain just doesn't work that way. I just started out almost five years ago writing for the joy of writing, some sort of prose, writing down a couple of stories. Ultimately, after I'd written several of those, I suddenly realized that maybe I was writing a book, so I began to take it far more seriously with the encouragement of my literary agent in New York, I sort of commenced. It probably took me a couple of years. I wrote really diligently. I wrote probably five hours a day and thoroughly enjoyed the process. The pandemic really had nothing to do with it. I realize a lot of people had taken that time to write books. Quite honestly, I wasn't that aware of the pandemic where I live. I do everything rather solitarily anyway, so I didn't have to adhere to the rules of the game, if you will. But yeah, that's pretty much the story of how it came about.

"I don't necessarily do a lot of reworking on songs. Once I've written them down, I'll go over them a couple of times and maybe change a word or a phrase here and there, but in general I work nowhere near as fast as Elton works, it takes slightly more time."

GM: *You talked about the rigorous pursuit of inspiration several times in the book. Was that the primary motivation of your extensive travels and people watching?*
BT: Yeah, I'm definitely an observer. I like to think the way I work is like a cinematographer. People fascinate me, incidents fascinate me. Everything goes into my mental recall. If a situation or a person I find interesting, I may jury-rig them into a different arena. One of the reasons I loved to travel in the past was because every different location throws up different characters. They may speak a different language, or they may act in a different way, but I find the whole geographical smorgasbord incredibly interesting. That's really what's fueled my songs all along, from the early days when I was writing continually as opposed to now, where I really only write when we intend on going in the studio. Back then, I would write on everything that came to hand, about everybody I saw that came to hand. So ultimately, I'd put all those pieces together like a jigsaw and come up with the characters that I did.

GM: *You talked in the book about being the recipient of fame in name only and being content with that. Are you still content with that, and having been around fame so much, would you say that you have the best kind of fame, in that your work is more famous than you are?*
BT: I'll be honest. I feel that I've been given as much notoriety and recognition as I really can handle and want. I've never been compartmentalized and pushed in the background. From day one, everything we did, Elton would regard as "we." If we made an album, it was "we made an album, we did this, we did that." I was always prevalent on the album covers. I was literally like part of the band, so I've always drawn as much attention to myself as I feel necessary or even want. Sometimes it's notoriety that I don't necessarily want, but if people know that I happen to be part of the songs, that's fine. If they don't, I'm not gonna lose any sleep over it. Our fan base knows who I am, and for the most part, I think history will be good to me in those terms, as far as my notoriety. As I say, I've got as much as I want and I can come and go as I want, so I think I've got the best of both worlds. Don't you think?

GM: *Absolutely. You can walk through an airport with no problem.*
BT: Exactly. It's my name that always causes people to go, "Whoa, wait a minute. Are you so and so?" The face doesn't do it anymore. It did in the early days, because as I say, my face was very prevalent on the album covers, but in no way do I look like that anymore, so people aren't going to recognize me unless they know me. The name is recognition alone. I get that all the time, everywhere. If I give people a credit card or have to fill out something, they, for the most part, know who I am. It's very gratifying, I might say, and I'm always as gracious as I can possibly be for the recognition.

GM: *I'm a lifelong huge Elton/Bernie fan, but you don't have to even be a fan at all to see Elton John the way I see him: a larger-than-life, complicated, swirling ball of entertainment energy and flamboyantly colorful character.*
BT: I wouldn't say complicated anymore. I think complication is a thing of his past. He's possibly one of the most positive people you could ever imagine meeting. Everything you just said is completely accurate.

GM: *But in your book, Elton seems to be the nonstressful steady character in your life, a low-maintenance friend through thick and thin. Is that how you see him in your life, an easy and supportive presence?*
BT: He's definitely the ultimate psychiatrist. If you need to get something off your chest, he's the first person you need to go to get some easy answers. He is a complete constant. You can always rely on him. And I certainly did back in the early days, back in our formative years when we first got together. I certainly leaned on him, not that he was incredibly worldly, but he was certainly more socially adept than I was at the time. I was a fish out of water floundering about in the big city. So he was definitely a crutch to lean on, and he did it magnificently and took care of me and made sure that I wasn't abused by the cynical mindset of others that might have viewed me as being a little wet around the ears and green, when I actually really wasn't. I was far more intelligent than they gave me credit for. But yeah, in a word, he's always been a constant. And he still is. I still talk to him regularly, and now that he's addicted to FaceTime, it's nice to be able to see him rather than just hear him, because in that way you sort of feel like if he calls you in the morning, you feel like you actually saw him in the morning.

GM: *Your account of the creation one Monday morning of "Your Song" is beautiful, and it's clear that you both realized that day how special it was. I heard Elton once in a solo performance tell the story similarly, ending with, "If Bernie hadn't brought me that lyric that day and I hadn't written the music right then, none of us would be here tonight." Do you agree with his assessment? Was that the turning point that gave you both the keys to the world?*
BT: I don't know if I have an answer to that. I like to think that we would have written something like-minded ultimately that would have kicked things off, but he might have a point there. I've never heard him necessarily say that, but if he said that at a show, he definitely had a reason for saying it. I suppose he has a point. I mean it certainly was an unusual and well-constructed song, and the fact that it came together so fast, nobody is ever gonna be able to understand the magic of that night. I don't know if I know myself. It's just one of those beautiful bits of kismet that just happened at the right time, and after us traversing the musical landscape for about a year and a half to break through, I guess that really was our ace in the hole. And maybe if it hadn't happened that day, maybe nothing would have happened. But who's to know? We don't know, do we? It almost sort of a mythical question because it really is a question that has no answer.

GM: *Speaking of writing lyrics quickly, you wrote about having written "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" in 10 minutes of drunk scribbling. "Candle in the Wind '97" came just as fast. Have you written in the other extreme, taking weeks or months to finalize a lyric?*
BT: No. I used to make notes and observe and scribble down on airline barf bags or receipts or napkins in bars; I used to do a lot of that. Not so much anymore, because I was traveling more back then, so on my travels and adventures, I would make copious notes, and then when it got to the point where we were gonna make a particular album, Elton would say, "Well,

we're to go in the studio in a couple of months. Why don't you put some material together?" That's when I'd gather all of those bits and pieces, whether it was the first line of "Mona Lisas and Mad Hatters" written in New York in 1970, I'd revisit with all these bits and pieces, and then I'd combine them into something, a full-structured song, but in general, no. I don't necessarily do a lot of reworking on songs. Once I've written them down, I'll go over them a couple of times and maybe change a word or a phrase here and there, but in general I work nowhere near as fast as Elton works, it takes slightly more time. But if you see that scene in *Rocketman* where Elton's writing "Your Song," that's very much how it happened. And that's very much how he writes. It's just finding the right chords. He's very immediate, very fast. I've never seen him belabor over any particular song.

GM: *It's scary, isn't it?*
BT: I don't know if it's scary because it's all I really know. it's really sort of grist for the mill for me, par for the course, whatever you wanna call it. It's just the way we do it.

GM: *In the book, you cite the line of Johnny Cash shooting a man in Reno just to watch him die as the level of storytelling you wanted to pursue. Does that type of storytelling in songwriting still inspire you, and do you feel you've reached that level in your work?*
BT: I don't think that type of storytelling in songs does exist anymore, not that sort of mythical America kind of poetry that existed in all those early kinds of songs, people like Johnny Horton and Marty Robbins talked about. I think that was completely different, and it was a huge product of the time. I was completely invested by that kind of panorama that those people were singing about because they were like mini

Taupin note on this group photo: "Celebrating the fine white suit that became my sartorial malfunction bowing to Princess Margaret. With the original trio (from L-R): Elton, drummer Nigel Olsson, myself and bassist Dee Murray."

BERNIE TAUPIN ARCHIVES

Bernie Taupin with girlfriend Loree Rodkin and Freddie Mercury of Queen at a post-concert party in Las Vegas, Nevada.

BRAD ELTERMAN/FILM MAGIC

movies, and they were dusty and dirty, and they weren't Roy Rogers and Gene Autry and the Lone Ranger. They were the real deal. And that was the kind of mythic America that I was attracted to. So that's why I love that kind of music because it told stories. And that's what I wanted to be, a storyteller. I didn't know what a songwriter was. I just wanted to make those mini movies and make them as realistic as possible and invest them with interesting characters and interesting scenarios. That's the name of the game for me. That's the way I want to be remembered, in fact.

GM: *How did the music of the Louvin Brothers, Lefty Frizzell and Hank Snow find their way to a teenager in England?*
BT: That's made very prevalent in the book. I luckily ran into an American serviceman who had those records in his possession, but some of those people were actually played on the radio. Certainly not the Louvin Brothers and Lefty Frizzell, that was manna from heaven due to this chance meeting with this serviceman who brought the records over with him from the United States. But Marty Robbins' "El Paso" was actually a hit in England, and so was some of the Johnny Horton stuff. "Battle of New Orleans" was very popular. So it was due to happenstance on two different levels that I got to hear that music. but the true authentic stuff like the Louvin Brothers and Lefty Frizzell I definitely discovered by chance.

GM: *Is it full circle to grow up listening to that kind of stuff and now know that Willie Nelson has sung your words?*
BT: It's not lost on me, believe me! And the fact that I'm going into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame with Willie is not lost on me either. That's just the icing on the cake for me.

GM: *I loved your story in the book about seeing Otis Redding when you were 16. Again, how did American soul find its way to you?*
BT: Otis Redding's soul was very popular in England and very popular as well where I grew up. *Otis Blue* was a huge album, and all of those guys, like Sam and Dave and Carla Thomas and Eddie Floyd, they all appeared locally. I mean not in my town because I didn't really grow up in a town; I grew up in a very isolated village, but about 20 miles away were these fishing towns, places like Grimsby and Scunthorpe and Boston. They would have ballrooms where these people would come and play. So yeah, I got to see Otis Redding. I got to see quite

a few people ultimately in my early teenage years.

GM: *In those early days with Reg, did you and he go see live music together much?*
BT: Oh yeah. In London, we'd see lots of different people. I write about that in the book. Everything from hardcore jazz to blues, usually clubs and stuff like that. We got to see a lot of different people. Absolutely.

GM: *Are those American music influences how you became an American? You're an American citizen.*
BT: Oh absolutely. I've been an American citizen since the '90s, although I've lived here since the '70s. So, I don't think of myself as anything other than an American citizen. I'm far more American than I ever was British. This is my country. This is my life. I am fully 100 percent American all the way.

GM: *You talked in the book about getting your parents over here. How did they feel about America as a home?*
BT: Oh, they loved it. Considering where they came from, it was like dying and going to heaven.

GM: *Just like it was for you.*
BT: Exactly.

GM: *We talked about those American country music influences, and you wrote the album* Tumbleweed Connection *with that feeling of the American West, and you really are an actual cowboy.*
BT: Ultimately, yes. It took me a while, but I definitely lived the life. It was the thing I aspired to most. But I knew that when I did it, I'd have to give myself to it 100 percent because I knew that the people involved with it were not remotely interested in celebrity. It was all about what you could do with a horse and a rope. And I proved my worth, and I rode as a non-pro cutter for 10 years, just dedicated my life to the whole process.

GM: *You said in the book that one of your daughters is also way into horses.*
BT: She's more than into horses — that's her life. She just lives, breathes and is in Texas now doing that. She's at Texas A&M and on the rodeo team.

Taupin with Elton John. "Still connected after all these years. If a picture paints a thousand words, this is it. One of my favorite photos of us and one that says it all."

LESTER COHEN

GM: *You wrote in the book about how The Band's* Music From Big Pink *inspired your lyrics for the* Tumbleweed Connection *album. The Band influence was of course apparent in the final product. Did you tell Elton before he wrote the music that that's what you were going for? Did you and he talk about that before recording?*
BT: No. I definitely drove the bus on that one because once I heard The Band, I realized that there was an avenue of songwriting that I could pursue that I didn't think was possible beforehand, and that was writing about, again, that sort of mythic America. I didn't think that was commercial or palatable to the people that were probably listening to contemporary music at the time. So they definitely broke down the doors on that one. Once I heard that, I just started writing these songs, and Elton just started writing to them, and it's funny because we'd come off doing the *Elton John* album, which was a very sort of orchestrated,

Elton John (right) with Taupin at a ceremony to award them gold discs for four of their co-written albums, April 26, 1973.

big production kind of thing that set the template for what we were going to do, and then suddenly we go in a completely different direction and do an Americana-styled album, which I think, when you think about it now, was incredibly radical, to go from the *Elton John* album to the *Tumbleweed* album. But I drove the bus on that, as I said. I wrote all those songs that were hopefully timeless Civil War-inspired, Western-inspired. I don't think we realized what we were making at the time. Once it was done, we suddenly realized, *Whoa, this has kind of got some sort of uniformity to it. There's some sort of concept here.* And then with David Larkham's album cover, it really set the template for it.

GM: *I'll ask the same question in a broader way: Did you or do you ever approach Elton with direction that you envision musically, such as "I hear this one as soulful or gospely," or do you more simply just say, "Here's a new lyric," and it comes out however it comes out?*
BT: If I have a strong feeling about something I've written, I point him musically, like you just said, you know, "Oh, this is kind of a Ray Charles kind of vibe," but then again, so much of the material dictates itself. If you see a lyric like "Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting," you know it's not gonna be a ballad, right? And if you see something like "Don't Let the Sun Go Down on Me," you know it's not going to be an up-tempo song. "Daniel" sounds like a mid-tempo song. We're too much in tune with each other to get in each other's way. We've been known to have certain conversations about things, yes.

GM: *I love that "Sad Songs (Say So Much)" on the page probably looked like a somber song.*
BT: Yeah, but it's got an upbeat nature to it. It's got a rumble to it to elevate it. The way that the lyric is conceived, ultimately, you can see how it would be slightly anthemic.

GM: *Yes! And the "we all need ..." is sort of the unifying concept of the song.*
BT: Right.

GM: *Are you pleased and satisfied with all your projects outside of Elton John? You've written lyrics for others, you produced that amazing David Ackles album [*American Gothic*], you've released solo albums as a singer and you fronted your own band Farm Dogs. Are those projects important to you, and do they feel different from writing with Elton?*
BT: They're different from writing with Elton, especially the Farm Dogs. I'm pretty proud of everything I've done. There are moments here and there maybe on the record that are not as good as I wanted them to be, but for the most part, any kind of solo endeavor that I've pursued, I certainly don't have any regret about, especially the Farm Dogs stuff, which I loved. But it was a moment in time, it was never built to last. We're trying to get the Farm Dogs albums put out on vinyl at the moment. I did an interview with somebody the other day who was such a Farm Dogs fan, they couldn't believe they weren't on vinyl. I kind of suddenly realized, you know what? Let's try and track 'em down and see if we can get them released. So, I think we might be able to get something done for Record Store Day next year or something. We'll see, but as I say, they're all slightly different. My first solo album, believe it or not, was a poetry album, which was kind of bizarre, and then I did an album for Asylum called *He Who Rides the Tiger*, which I thought lyrically was interesting. Melodically, it was a bit wanting. Then I did the *Tribe* album, which was really a hard-rock pop album, which was pretty damn good, I thought. I have no qualms about my solo endeavors.

MICHAEL PUTLAND/GETTY IMAGES

50 YEARS OF A WIZARD/A TRUE STAR

1973 / A Fan-sponsored Celebration / 2023

Fifty years after its release, Todd Rundgren's "A Wizard, A True Star" stands as a pivotal milestone that solidified his dedicated fan base following the breakthrough pop masterpiece "Something/Anything?" AWATS (as it is known) not only showcased Rundgren's musical prowess but also his unique audience engagement. This was accomplished in part by supplying a postcard in the packaging for fans to submit their names; they subsequently appeared on a poster stylized in his image included with the "Todd" album. Thus began Rundgren's eccentric interactive connection with fiercely loyal followers. This name-gathering tradition persisted through various instances not to exclude this tribute. Despite the album's cohesive presentation as a continuous musical experience, AWATS birthed timeless tracks such as the anthem "Just One Victory" which frequently serves as concert finale. Evidently, "A Wizard, A True Star" holds a special place in Rundgren's heart, as it has been performed live in its entirety on two separate tours the first of which featured the "Rainbow AWATS" art above. This dedication is further underscored by the album's numerous reissues, emphasizing its enduring significance in Rundgren's musical legacy.

WiBWorx and this tribute are not officially affiliated with Todd Rundgren

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(clockwise from top left) Bryan Bassett, Scott Holt, Roger Earl and Rodney O'Quinn pose with their latest release, *Sonic Mojo*.

JAKE COUGHKLIN

SONIC MOJO OF FOGHAT

BY ANDREW DALY

As Foghat's only continuous member since the group's inception in 1971 and as an early member of Savoy Brown, Roger Earl has seen it all.

Earl was there for the gold-certified years that featured records such as *Foghat* (1972), *Energized* (1974) and *Rock and Roll Outlaws* (1974). And to be sure, when the band's early lineup was shaken up, Earl proved to be a rock as the group shifted from a straight-up blues-rock band to a world-beating "classic rock" institution on the heels of 1975's *Fool for the City*, which featured the eternally loved FM radio staple "Slow Ride."

In the years since, two more gold records followed by way of *Night Shift* (1976) and *Stone Blue* (1978). And, of course, who could forget cult classics like 1979's *Boogie Motel* or latter-day albums like 1994's *Return of the Boogie Men* and 1998 *Road Cases*? Indeed, Roger Earl has lent a hand to boatloads of well-loved, always-in-rotation cuts, and no one would blame him — or his bandmates — for resting on their laurels.

But if Foghat's latest, *Sonic Mojo*, is any indication, easing back on the throttle is the furthest thing from the band's mind, with Earl telling *Goldmine*, "We had so much fun doing this album, we really did. This version of Foghat gets along so well, and I think that's apparent in the music we're making."

He continues, "We started recording *Sonic Mojo* about three years ago in a studio down in DeLand, Florida, by going through a couple of songs we put together with Scott [Holt]. We really liked those couple of tunes; they got the ball rolling and ended up on the album. It was great to get going on this like we did; Scott and I went full bore into it. And we'll be releasing this album on vinyl via our label, just like the last one. We're excited about that, too."

Of note, longtime frontman and guitarist Charlie Huhn, who had taken over for "Lonesome" Dave Peverett after his

JAKE COUGHKLIN

death in 2000, retired from Foghat in 2022. But don't worry; the new voice box, Scott Holt, is already proving his mettle.

To that end, Earl says, "I think if Dave had ever met Scott, they would have gotten along famously. Scott has played with Buddy Guy and a ton of other people, so he can really play. He's steeped in blues and rock music and into all the classic blues songs like Dave was."

Further elaborating on what makes Holt a fit, Earl says, "Honestly, Scott is into a lot of stuff that I've never even heard of. He digs deep and, like Dave, is very passionate about the music he loves. It's like he sleeps with his guitar. (laughs) He's always working on songs and always keeps himself inspired. That's one of the many beauties of playing with him; he's deeply enthusiastic about what we're doing."

In support of *Sonic Mojo*, Roger Earl dialed in with *Goldmine* to dig more into the importance of singer-guitarist Scott Holt, his favorite Foghat records, vinyl collecting and his infamous Jimi Hendrix audition.

GOLDMINE: *Has having Scott Holt aboard changed Foghat's chemistry?*
ROGER EARL: Well, we had a great time. Having Scott in the band has been great for Bryan [Bassett] because I think he's enjoying having a compadre on guitar next to him. But what I love most about this is that it covers everything from jazz to blues to country to hillbilly rock and roll. As a band, we had a blast doing it, and Scott was absolute gas to play with. Once the songs began to come out, they just kept flowing one after the next, which led to us having a lot of songs left over. And that's probably why this took so long to finish — we had to choose between them. So, a lot of the leftovers will probably end up on the next Foghat record.

Roger Earl will never stop enjoying the energy of playing the drums in concert.

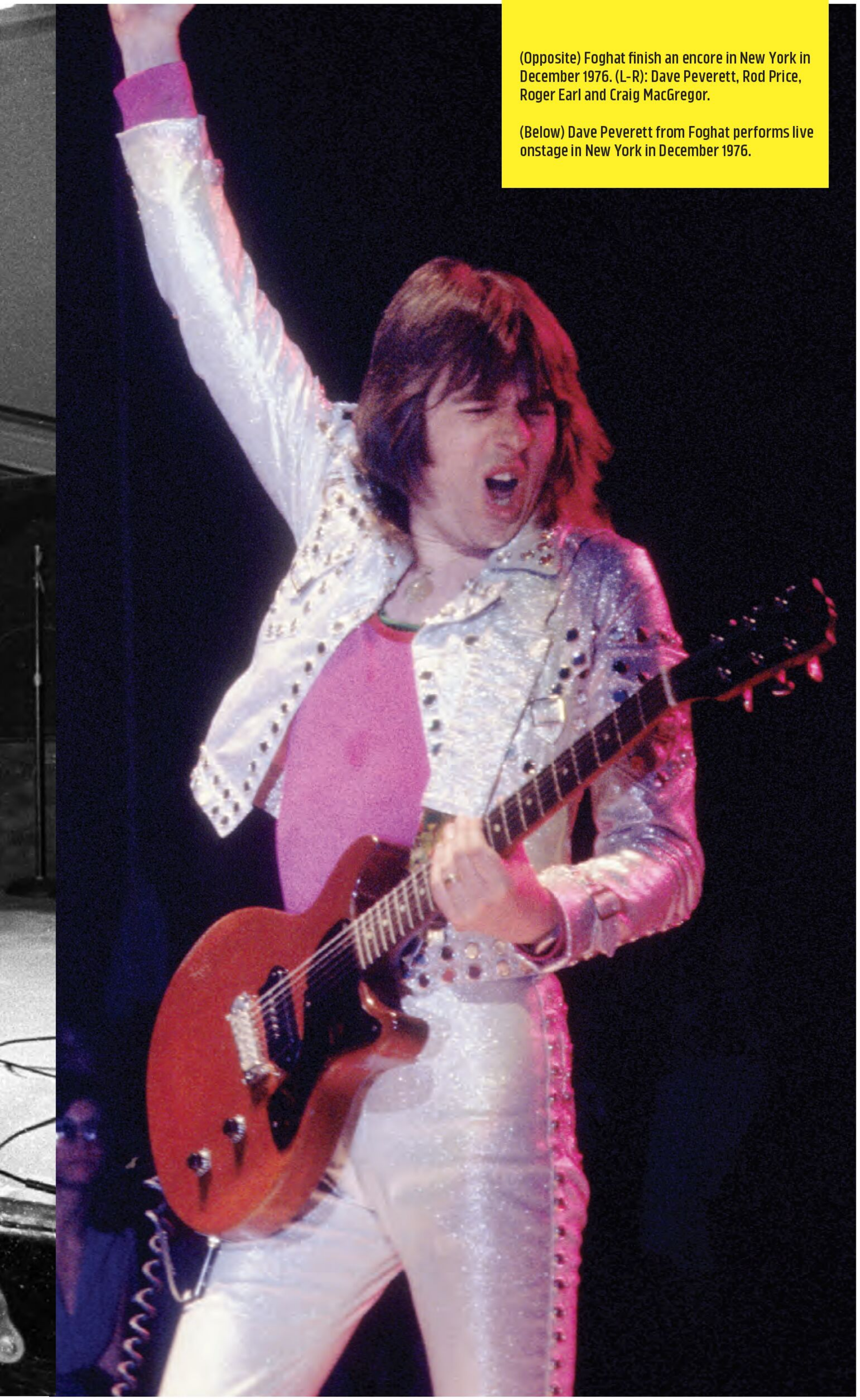
(opposite) Scott Holt, Rodney O'Quinn and Bryan Bassett in the middle of a guitar jam onstage,

JAKE COUGHKLIN

Foghat

(Opposite) Foghat finish an encore in New York in December 1976. (L-R): Dave Peverett, Rod Price, Roger Earl and Craig MacGregor.

(Below) Dave Peverett from Foghat performs live onstage in New York in December 1976.



GM: *As I understand it, Kim Simmonds offered up some material for* Sonic Mojo *before his passing. Is that correct?*
RE: Yes, he did. Kim passed in December [2022], but we were able to work with him on some tracks before then in a writing capacity. But three or so years ago, Foghat did a show with Savoy Brown, and Kim said, "I'd really like to write some songs for Foghat." Kim had already played on our previous album, *Under the Influence*, so I said, "That would be great ... as long as you're playing on them."

But unfortunately, Kim's illness didn't allow him to play. Even on the last record he made, he only played slide guitar as his fingers weren't working for him. But he did send me four tracks with his vocals, a bit of guitar and a drum machine. So, once we got our grubby little mitts on them, I think we made them into something that Kim would be delighted with.

GM: *Considering your long history with Kim, I can imagine working with him one last time was very meaningful.*
RE: Oh, it certainly was. From the very beginning, when Kim said he'd like to write songs for us, it was important to me that he played them. Truthfully, Kim had been playing a lot over the last 10 years, and he had a huge inventory of songs, all of which sounded terrific. So, I didn't expect anything less from him; I knew they would be outstanding, and they were. We all loved them, and it's just another of the many interesting things that happened as we made this record.

GM: *You've been soldiering on with a shoulder injury for some time, right? Did that affect the outcome of* Sonic Mojo*?*
RE: Ah, yes, I have been. I've been playing with a torn shoulder in my left arm, which was ripped up a while back. Foghat had played a show in Massachusetts over the winter around a year and a half ago, and when I got home, I had around three feet of snow in my yard. Well, I decided to show off in front of my girlfriend, and long story short — I tore my shoulder apart. So, I was playing half-wounded and needed to tape my shoulder up during the recording.

It was difficult; I was not able to play for more than two or three hours in the

RICHARD E. AARON/REDFERNS

studio. Thankfully, I had it fixed this year by a surgeon in Manhattan who repairs athletes. And as a drummer, I guess I am sort of an athlete, so that worked out quite well, and I've got no pain now. It took some time to regain the strength in my arm, and I will say it was a little weird playing with a damaged arm. But you do what you've got to do, right?

GM: *What challenges does Foghat face as an older band making records in the modern era?*
RE: You know, it's not that bad, really. We've got a brilliant manager, and she's put a brilliant team together. But we understand that things are completely different now than they were even five or 10 years ago; it's hard to get your music heard now. But our manager has a team of five or six people who work very hard when the records get released to promote them and get them into spaces where people can actually hear them. And I've noticed that Foghat does have a lot of younger people in the audience when we play live. People my age don't even turn up anymore; they're too tired. (laughs)

GM: *Do you feel pressure to make an album that "sounds like Foghat," or are you comfortable experimenting to a certain degree?*
RE: I take each song one at a time. I don't get granular to the point that I'm saying, "Oh, I need my bass drum to sound like this," or "My snare must sound like that." I just play the music that's in front of me; that's what the drummer's job is, you know? I play for the song and don't worry about the things that are going on beyond that. But we do look to do things that are appropriate for the band, which are basically drums, bass, guitars and vocals.

So, there's no pressure for us to make something that sounds explicitly like our past records. What I love about music is being creative, and that spirit is deeply embedded in this rendition of Foghat. It's a relaxed environment, but one that's very productive and has us enjoying the fact that we can get a lot of stuff done. Honestly, I'm just glad to be here doing this with these guys.

GM: *When you reflect on Foghat's discography, which record do you feel is the band's definitive statement?*
RE: I don't think I could pick one. But

Foghat (L-R): Rod Price, Roger Earl, Craig MacGregor and "Lonesome" Dave Peverett posing for a portrait with the Foghat jet at the San Francisco Airport in 1978.

RICHARD McCAFFREY/ MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/ GETTY IMAGES

Roger Earl of Foghat and Swedish actress Britt Ekland pose for a portrait in 1978 in San Francisco, California.

RICHARD McCAFFREY/ MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/ GETTY IMAGES

along with our first album [*Foghat*], there are two or three that really stick out. Well, actually, all of them are special to me to some degree, you know? Certain songs on each record remind me of a certain period. But the first album is especially meaningful because we had Dave Edmunds there, who is an absolute f**king genius. Dave was incredible to work with because he transformed us from an average blues-rock band to a band that could do amazing things.

The way Dave recorded us — and he played on a few songs, I think — was an example of him being one of the best producers to work with. And then, there's *Fool for the City*, when we had Nick [Jameson] on bass, who became a good friend of mine. I learned more from working with Nick than any other musician. He's a great guy, a great musician, and really someone who can play anything — don't you hate guys like that? (laughs) We'd just give him a groove, and he would pick it right up.

GM: *You've got a great vinyl edition of* Sonic Mojo *in the works, right? Are you a collector yourself?*

RE: Oh, yes, absolutely. And Scott actually has a record shop [Variety Records] in Columbia, Tennessee, so you know he's an avid vinyl collector. As for me, my record player was not functioning for a long time. And so, for my birthday one year, Scott bought me a new Technics record setup, which I love. And each year since Scott has gotten me vinyl as a gift.

GM: *What are some of your favorite records in your collection?*

RE: Oh, too many to name! But let's see; I'm a big Johnny Cash fan and have been since I was a child. I was probably the only kid in Southwest London riding his bike to school while singing those Johnny Cash songs. (laughs) I love his records because each song has a story, especially with those early albums.

I love that about his music. I love Hank Williams, too. All that hillbilly country-type stuff is incredible. The thing about me is that I'm still a fan, even though I've covered a lot of this stuff. That's something I've never lost; I've always been a fan. I don't believe that's something that will ever change. It certainly makes collecting vinyl more fun, too.

FOGHAT U.S. ALBUMS

DISCOGRAPHY

ALBUMS

BEARSVILLE

- 23747 In the Mood for Something Rude, 1982, $25.00
- 23888 Zig-Zag Walk, 1983, $25.00
- BHS 6990 Boogie Motel, 1979, $25.00
- BHS 6999 Tight Shoes, 1980, $25.00
- BR 2077 Foghat, 1972, $25.00
- BR 2136 Foghat (aka Rock 'n' Roll), 1973, $25.00
- BR 6950 Energized, 1974, $25.00
- BR 6956 Rock and Roll Outlaws, 1974, $25.00
- BR 6959 Fool for the City, 1975, $25.00
- BR 6962 Night Shift, 1976, $25.00
- BRK 3578 Girls to Chat & Boys to Bounce, 1981, $25.00
- BRK 6971 Foghat Live, 1977, $25.00
- BRK 6977 Stone Blue, 1978, $25.00
- BRK 6980 Fool for the City, 1978, $20.00

RHINO

- R1- 70088 The Best of Foghat, 1989, $25.00
- R1- 70889 Rock and Roll Outlaws, 1988, $20.00
- R1- 70890 Foghat, 1988, $20.00
- RNLP 70881 Stone Blue, 1987, $20.00
- RNLP 70882 Fool for the City, 1987, $20.00
- RNLP 70883 Energized, 1988, $20.00
- RNLP 70888 Night Shift, 1988, $20.00
- RNLP 70884 Foghat Live, 1988, $20.00
- RNLP 70887 Foghat, 1988, $20.00

Current market value for records in Near Mint condition

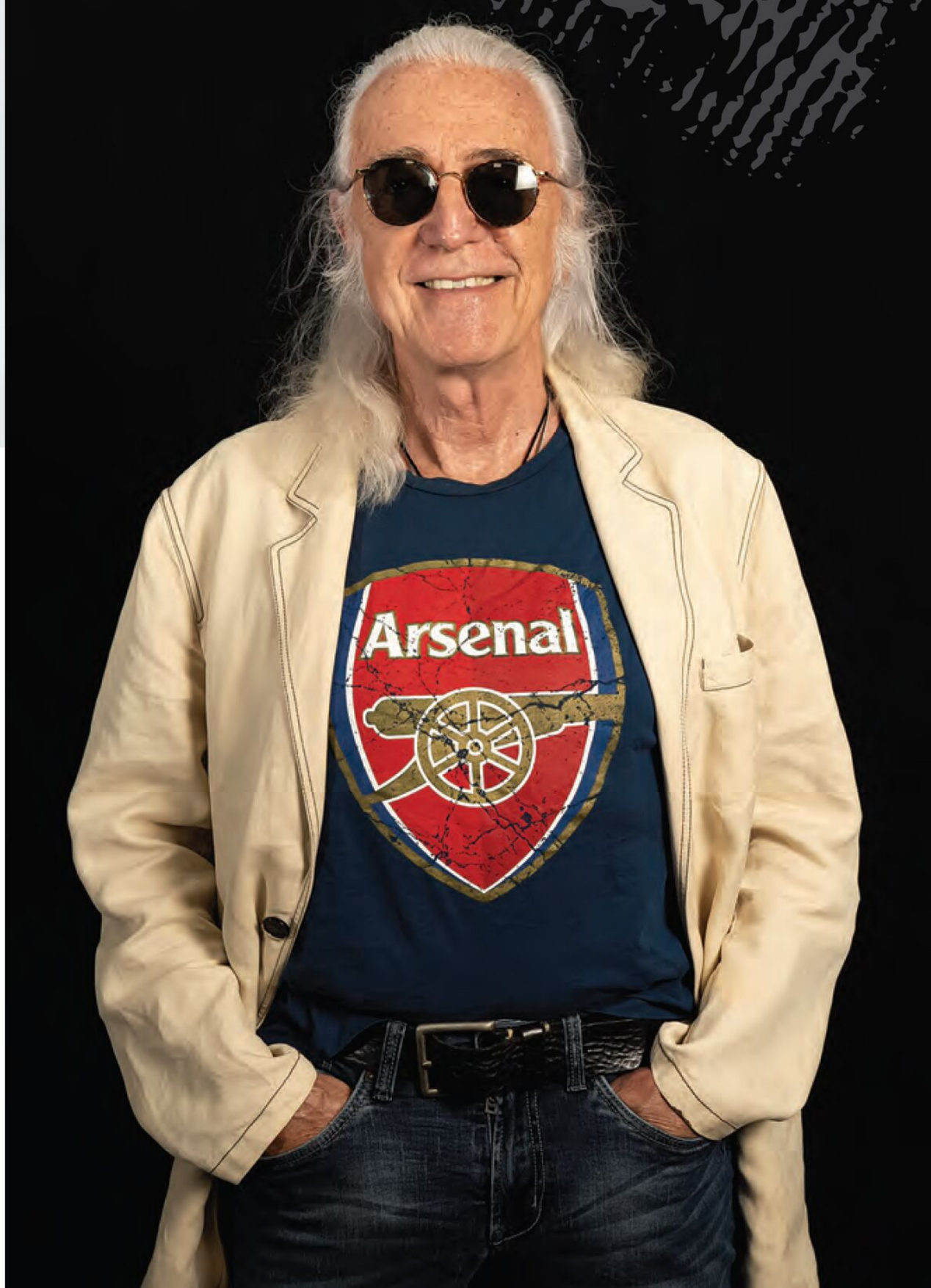
GM: *You famously auditioned for Jimi Hendrix before Mitch Mitchell landed the gig. Have you ever considered what your career might have been like had you gotten the job?*

RE: It's funny that you say that because I was thinking about it not too long ago. Occasionally, I'll reflect on the things that have happened throughout my life, and it's interesting to think about how things could have gone. But the truth is that Mitch Mitchell was an absolutely brilliant drummer. I do believe that Jimi had already made up his mind to have Mitch join even before I auditioned.

Jimi was so kind to me, and I had loads of fun. When he started playing, I really had no idea what was happening; there was his vast Marshall stack, and all these unreal, incredible sounds were coming from them. But after about five or 10 minutes, I could see he had a plan, and we did some blues, a Bob Dylan cover, a Chuck Berry song, and jammed a bit. I didn't get the gig, obviously, but that's fine. I wasn't up to that task, and I believe Jimi picked the right drummer, the brilliant Mitch Mitchell.

"I'm a big Johnny Cash fan and have been since I was a child. I was probably the only kid in Southwest London riding his bike to school while singing those Johnny Cash songs."

— ROGER EARL



JAKE COUGHKLIN

NIGHT RANGER'S **JACK BLADES** TALKS ABOUT THE INHERENT FUN OF THE BAND'S MUSIC, EVEN WITH A 80-PIECE ORCHESTRA.

BY ANDREW DALY

SYMPHONIC RANGER

The truth is that behind the scenes, many of the bands we see onstage today are less about fun and more about business. And that's fine, but as a fan who loves said band's music, you'd like to think that the musicians onstage at least like each other, right?

Alas, another hard truth is that more often than not, that's not the case, but not when it comes to Night Ranger; just ask Jack Blades: "When you come backstage to our dressing room, we've got music blasting," Blades tells *Goldmine*. "We're listening to Metallica, Keith Richards' *Main Offender* or Judas Priest."

He continues, "We're taking tequila shots and genuinely happy to be together. It's so funny; one time, a manager from another band we were on tour with came back and said, 'Wow, you guys actually like each other, don't you?' And we were like, 'Uh, yeah! We're having a blast.' So, that's the key to Night Ranger; we're having a blast out there, man. We're enjoying every minute of this, and we'll keep doing it until it's not fun anymore."

The fun inherent within Night Ranger's ranks is refreshing, to be sure. What's also refreshing is the continued success the group have experienced, as evidenced by their latest offering, *40 Years and a Night*, a live record that found Blades and company backed by an 80-piece orchestra in support of the group's iconic cuts.

Grandiose as that is, combined with the fact that Night Ranger is spryer than ever, one would assume that Blades foresaw big things on the horizon when the band hit the scene, but no, his outlook was to the contrary, saying, "Bro, when we started this band, I couldn't imagine myself 40 years later playing these songs, period. But here we are, playing for crowds that keep getting bigger..."

Digging deeper, Blades continues, "We just finished an amazing tour through amphitheaters with Bret Michaels, which was phenomenal. There were thousands of people every night, which was a wonderful thing. So, in that respect, when we released our first album in the early '80s, I never imagined I'd be talking with you about these songs. And I never imagined I'd have an orchestra with a string section interpreting them. That's like the icing on the cake. It's a dream come true."

He might not have imagined it, but Blades, who is still joined by '80s holdovers Kelly Keagy (drums) and Brad Gillis (guitars), along with Eric Levy

(keyboards) and Keri Kelli (guitars), who joined the band in 2011 and 2014, respectively, are more vital than ever.

In an era where bands are calling it quits or burning out, the mighty institution of SoCal glam rock remains effervescent. To that end, Blades tells us, "In Night Ranger's case, we like to have fun. We're at a stage in the game where if it's not fun, we're not going to do this anymore. But all the guys in this band are literally having a blast. Every single time we step onstage, and the lights go down, we hear that crowd roar, and we're having the most fun we've ever had in our life."

As to what exactly sets Night Ranger apart, Blades continues, "We're not one of those bands that just like, 'Oh, God, we've to go out and just get through this'; it's never been that way with Night Ranger, and it isn't that way now. We're having more fun now than ever, and that's because we don't give a sh*t. We do whatever we want, play whatever songs we want, and keep it fun with new setlists and cool sh*t."

Indeed, being in a band that not only likes one another but is still fully capable of delivering the same high-energy show that fans came to love and expect in the '80s is an envious position to be in.

To be sure, Blades would agree, but he doesn't take that for granted, nor does he forsake the love that Night Ranger's audience showers on them: "At this stage, I firmly believe the audience feels that energy, too. The fans coming to Night Ranger shows just want to have a great time and forget about life for a few hours."

He concludes, "We create a fun atmosphere where we laugh, joke, scream, yell and kick ass. And we create an interactive show that gets people involved with the songs that have transcended the test of time. And truly, I feel like we're the luckiest guys on the planet that we get to go out every day and do this as a livelihood. Here we are all these years later, and we're still drawing crowds and having more fun than we ever could have imagined. I'm thankful for it."

GOLDMINE: *Tell me about* Night Ranger's 40 Years and a Night *live record.*

Night Ranger 2023 (L-R): Brad Gillis, Keri Kelli, Eric Levy and Kelly Keagy.

JACK BLADES: We're pretty excited about this because we've always been like, "Oh, man, it would be so great to someday have a symphony play all these Night Ranger songs with us," and then this while things actually went down. It was wonderful to have an 80-piece orchestra play behind us while we were up front playing these old songs.

We did it at the KeyBank State Theater in Cleveland, Ohio, with the Contemporary Youth Orchestra backing us up. It was so cool to see these musicians, who ranged from 12 to 18 years old, from all these different schools, up there. It was such an amazing experience for us sitting there right in the middle of it all, you know? To hear those old Night Ranger songs with strings and horns, man, it was such a new slant, and I think people are really going to love it.

GM: *To your point, that new slant is quite different from how you've been playing those tracks all these years. Did you approach the songs differently, knowing you'd have an orchestra behind you?*

JB: That's an interesting question. And truthfully, it's not really hard to get up there and rock out. But when you've got an 80-piece orchestra behind you, it's like a massive support, you know? Half the time we were up there, we kept turning around and were just in total awe of the whole thing. Even though we had rehearsals, it was still one of those things where when you see and hear it, your mouth drops open because you're hearing all this stuff in such a new way.

When I first heard it, it literally brought tears to my eyes because I was hearing strings, timpani drums, different accents, and things that the orchestra brought out that I'd never heard before within those songs. They didn't just augment the songs; they brought things to light that were so amazing. To hear songs like "Sister Christian," "Don't Tell Me You Love Me" and "Goodbye" in that way was just so mind-boggling for us.

GM: *Did hearing the songs with an orchestral treatment alter how you view them?*

JB: It's interesting because at this stage of the game, when I go out onstage and we're playing shows, as this summer, I still hear that symphony in my head. What they did still comes back to me at certain points when we're playing normal shows now. It's really bizarre. (laughs) We'll be doing "When You Close Your Eyes" or the intro to "Sister Christian," and it just blows my mind because I hear the ghost of the orchestra in my head. So, all summer long, I've had a smile across my face — even more so than usual — because I kind of love that. I'm hearing all these parts in my mind's eye, which is crazy.

GM: *What about Night Ranger's music lends itself to an orchestral treatment?*

JB: Night Ranger has always focused on the song, the verses, the choruses and the melodies. When we started putting this band together, if we couldn't sit down with an acoustic guitar and sing the verses and the chorus without it coming across as a good song, we wouldn't run with it. In that way, I think that our music has transcended within our genre. Our focus on harmonies and good melodies rather than just riffs has served us well, and because of that, I think the music of Night Ranger is more easily adapted by an orchestra.

GM: *You've got a great vinyl package planned for* 40 Years and a Night. *Are you a collector yourself?*

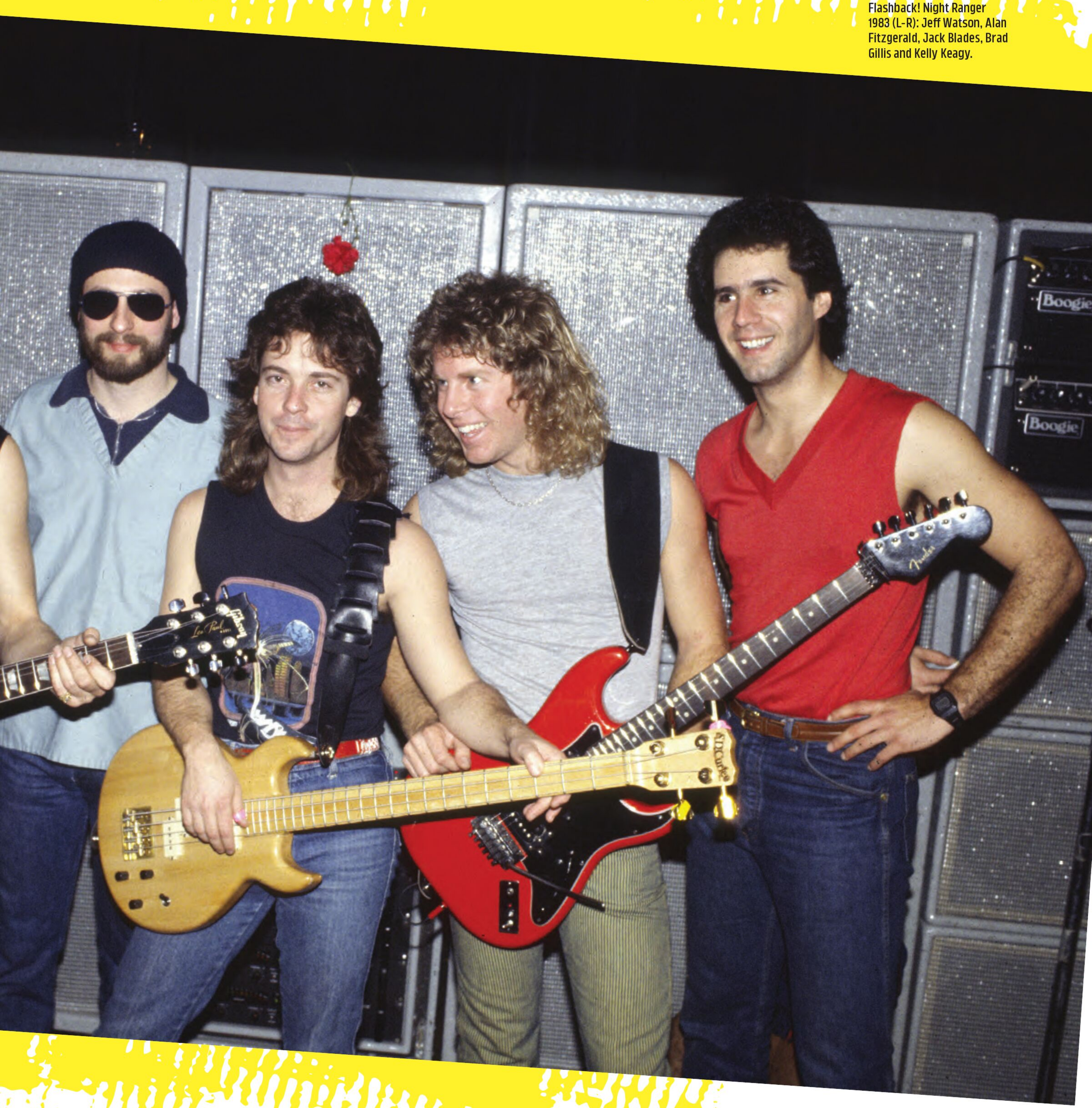
JB: Oh, yeah, I have stacks of vinyl records. I mean, at first, I was tempted to get rid of all my records, you know what I mean? And I'll admit, I did get rid of some of them years ago when I moved or wanted to downsize. But I always kept my favorites, which is really great, and I'm glad I did. I think it's so great that we're able to put stuff out on vinyl again because it's making such a huge comeback, and like you said, we're putting this album out on vinyl, too.

GM: *What can you tell me about the package?*

JB: We're putting out limited-edition colors in red, yellow and a few other limited-edition colors. I've seen the cover and was just like, "Man, I love this!" I remember being a kid, and the greatest thing to do was go buy a big old bag of vinyl, look at the covers, open it up, look through the packaging and stare at the fold-out. And later, I'd open it up and shake all the stems and seeds from my pot out. (laughs) That's mainly what we did on those trippy, old Yes records. (laughs) But we'd sit back and listen to the song, which was a whole experience.

CHRIS WALTER/WIREIMAGE

Flashback! Night Ranger 1983 (L-R): Jeff Watson, Alan Fitzgerald, Jack Blades, Brad Gillis and Kelly Keagy.



NIGHT RANGER U.S. ALBUMS/SINGLES DISCOGRAPHY

ALBUMS

BOARDWALK

- NB1- 33259 Dawn Patrol, 1982, $15.00

MCA

- R5460 Dawn Patrol, 1984, $15.00
- 5456 Midnight Madness, 1984, $15.00

MCA CAMEL

- 5593 7 Wishes, 1985, $15.00
- 5839 Big Life, 1987, $15.00

45s

BOARDWALK

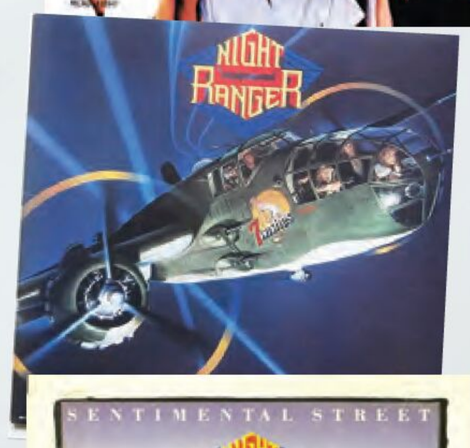
- NNB7-11- 171 Don't Tell Me You Love Me/ Night Ranger, 1983, $5.00
- NB7-11- 175 Sing Me Away/Play Rough, 1983, $5.00
- NB7-11- 181 Young Girl in Love/Call My Name, 1983, $5.00

MCA

- 52305 You Can Still Rock in America/Let Him Run, 1983, $5.00
- 52350 Sister Christian/Chippin' Away, 1984, $5.00
- 52420 When You Close Your Eyes/Why Does Love Have to Change, 1984, $5.00
- 53495 Don't Start Thinkin' I'm Alone Tonight/Kiss Me Where It Hurts, 1989, $5.00

MCA CAMEL

- 552591 Sentimental Street/Night Machine, 1985, $5.00
- 52661 Four in the Morning I Can't Take Any More/The Boy Needs to Rock, 1985, $5.00
- 52729 Goodbye/Seven Wishes, 1985, $5.00
- 53013 The Secret of My Success/Carry On, 1987, $5.00
- 53131 Hearts Away/Better Let it Go, 1987, $5.00
- 53364 I Did It for Love/Woman in Love, 1988, $5.00



Current market value for records in Near Mint condition

So, we're excited to put this out on vinyl, and also, CD, DVD and Blu-ray.

GM: *Which are the most meaningful of the records you have held onto?*
JB: I'd say *Who's Next* by The Who is one of them because it's one of my all-time favorite albums. It's one of the great classic albums of all time, and I've had my copy forever. And a funny story about *Who's Next* is that the guy who photographed the cover of that album, Ethan Russell, did the album cover for the first Damn Yankees [*Damn Yankees*] record.

Ethan told us a story about driving out to the location to shoot the cover for *Who's Next*, and all the guys had to take a leak. So, they pulled over, and Ethan got out with the guys from The Who, and as they were sort of wandering around, he snapped a bunch of shots, and they were all so great. In fact, they were so great that Ethan said, "We're going to use these for the cover," and that's where that cover comes from.

Aside from The Who, another album I've had on vinyl forever is the first album from Nazz [*Nazz*], which is Todd Rundgren's first band. And then, I've got the first album from Grin [*Grin*], Nils Lofgren's first band. But I've got vinyl from all over the map; I've got stuff from Jaco Pastorius, Sly and the Family Stone and so much more that I've added to my collection.

GM: *Is there a piece of Night Ranger memorabilia that you've held on to that holds particular meaning?*
JB: When I started with Night Ranger, and we were doing the *Dawn Patrol* album [1982], I played an S.D. Curlee bass, which was natural-colored. And then, Hamer came to me, and we started working on my signature bass with them [Blades Bass], so I got rid of the S.D. Curlee bass. I think I gave one away at an auction that a Houston radio station was doing in '85.

And then, years later, after it had probably been on somebody's wall forever, my wife came across it via an antique dealer in Florida who had bought it. My wife's friend knew this antique dealer, and she told her, "This is Jack's original bass," so my wife contacted him, bought it from the dealer and gave it to me on my birthday about three years ago.

So, I've got the original S.D. Curlee bass that I played on the *Dawn Patrol* stuff before I gave it away. I don't play it anymore, but it's a really wonderful piece of history. It's pretty special that it found its way back to me and that it's back in my life and my possession again. I love it.

GM: *What's the secret to Night Ranger's longevity?*
JB: The secret is that we've been persistent. When we formed Night Ranger in April of 1980, it took us a couple of years to get a record deal because every label passed on us. I think they actually passed on us *twice*. And then, finally, one label in Boardwalk Records took a shot on us, and we made it happen. They took that shot, but the whole reason we were still there after being rejected repeatedly was persistence.

And all these years later, even though we broke up in '89 for a bit, and everyone went their separate ways when we got back together in '96, we've remained persistent. We've been together since and have never stopped rockin' and rollin'. Like I said before, the key is to keep having fun. So, there's no arguments, and there's no craziness. That's the truth of it. We get along, love each other, and love what we're doing.

A classic shot of Jack Blades with Night Ranger in 1984.

CHRIS WALTER/WIREIMAGE

LISA LAKE/WIREIMAGE

Jersey Boy

PHOTOGRAPHER FRANK STEFANKO NOT ONLY CONNECTED WITH BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN VISUALLY BUT ON A DEEPER LEVEL AS WELL. **BY IVOR LEVENE**

As long as there has been popular music, there has been music photography. The two go hand in hand, and the images that the photographers capture are still a vital link between artist and audience. This is especially true in a bygone era where every single move by an artist wasn't captured on a thousand cellphones and posted on YouTube mere hours after a live concert.

Photographer Frank Stefanko at the "From Asbury Park to the Promised Land: The Life and Music of Bruce Springsteen" exhibition at the National Constitution Center on February 15, 2012, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

In those halcyon days where we had to rely on the work of a skilled photographer to act as the interface between listener and musician, there were a handful of photographers who rose to prominence, and here at *Goldmine* we have written extensively about many of them. Henry Diltz, Bob Gruen, Neal Preston, Lynn Goldsmith and Annie Leibovitz are some of the names that come immediately to mind. One thing that the aforementioned photographers have in common is that their portfolios don't tend to concentrate on a singular artist. There is a small list of photographers who were there at the beginning of an artist's career, documenting their rise to stardom in a very intimate and revealing manner.

Dezo Hoffmann did it with The Beatles; his photos of The Fab Four show a band at the cusp of international fame, giving us a glimpse into some of the most intimate facets of their rise to stardom. Here in the U.S., there is another photographer whose work is very closely associated with one of the biggest artists in the history of American music, and that man is Frank Stefanko. The artist of course is Bruce Springsteen. Yes, Stefanko has shot other artists such as Patti Smith with an equal amount of excellence (it was actually his relationship with Smith that brought him to Springsteen), but there is probably no photographer more closely associated with a single artist than Stefanko is with Springsteen.

What Stefanko has given us is more than just a bunch of random photos of Bruce and The E Street Band, or a collection of live shots. He has given us a look deep inside the lives of the band, drawing us in and making us feel that we know these people, a real sense of, "I know exactly what Bruce was thinking there." If you grew up around the East Coast in a certain time, it's quite easy to put yourself into "Corvette Winter," leaning against a car in a nondescript neighborhood, right at the time where the snow has melted just enough for you to get a jump on spring, after having stored your automotive love away for the winter. You've waited months for this day, and you aren't going to be denied, filled with youthful exuberance and a lust for the months ahead, feeling that something great is just over the horizon, just past the state line, much like Springsteen conveys in his songs.

Stefanko is responsible for the covers of two of Springsteen's seminal albums, *Darkness on the Edge of Town* and *The River*, and has shot countless numbers of intimate portraits of Springsteen, and in turn has made us all feel that we *know* Bruce in a way that we know no other artist. Stefanko made Springsteen relatable to us all, and for an artist who has always strived to relate to his fans like no other artist, the collaboration between the two was an intrinsic part of the Springsteen ethos. To look at one of Stefanko's images of Springsteen is to get a glimpse of an artist about to break out creatively. Fame has not consumed him yet, which makes many of the photos even more poignant. Stefanko uses black-and-white photography brilliantly, giving each and every photo a depth and a meaning. There is a lot a viewer can read into one of Stefanko's photos, and that is precisely what he was after. This is why you can almost place yourself into one of his photos; you could be you hanging out playing pinball with Springsteen. There's no doubt that Stefanko's shots of Springsteen are intimate portraits of one of American music's most *relevant* artists.

There is a third character in this collaboration: the state of New Jersey, a locale that plays prominently in this story. Stefanko is from South Jersey, and Springsteen is a Central Jersey guy, so in a way, this is a tale of two cities, Philly and Asbury Park. Had this story unfolded anywhere else in the country, it probably wouldn't have played out exactly the same. There is no denying the part that New Jersey plays in popular culture. It's given us not only Springsteen, but it's also given us Bon Jovi, Frank Sinatra, Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, *The Sopranos*, *The Jersey Shore* and countless other cultural touchstones. There's a sense of brotherhood almost that goes with being from New Jersey; if you've lived there, you know what I'm talking about. That sense of brotherhood — of a shared set of dreams— is what makes these photos and what they convey even more poignant. So, step back in time with us and ride along with Bruce and Frank, to the diner down the street or the stoop of Frank's house. Enjoy the ride!

GOLDMINE: *Let's start at the beginning of your career. You stated in your book,* Days of Hopes and Dreams, *that at age eight you were completely possessed by photography and that you were learning from television. This is something that most eight-year-olds weren't doing, especially in the 1950s. Was this a gift?*

FRANK STEFANKO: Well, I was fascinated by the images that were coming across on the TV, whether it be a live broadcast, a news broadcast or a sporting event. Remember, this was the '50s, there wasn't a great variety. There were shows such as *The Jackie Gleason Show*, *Your Show of Shows* with Sid Caesar, Martin and Lewis on *The Colgate Comedy Hour* and a crazy little show called *What in the World* where they discussed ancient artifacts. It was crazy what came on. Then there were educational shows like *Ding Dong School* that I was fascinated by. But more than all of that, what really caught my attention was the channels that showed old black-and-white movies, vintage movies, and I got a chance to study the lighting of the old movies. The composition of the design on each frame was beautiful. I mean, they knew what they were doing, they had a good sense of art. And so, that kind of just trickled out. So that in conjunction later in my life, when I had a lot of art classes, helped to guide me toward what makes a good photograph, a good composition, a good piece of art.

GM: *Let's talk about the physical side to photography, something that's very dear to me. Do you still dabble in the darkroom?*

FS: No. I did a talk at Monmouth University quite a few years ago, when my first book on Bruce came out. Since then, I did this gigantic 10-pound book that's called, *Bruce Springsteen—Further Up the Road*, which is a signed and numbered book. It contains almost 45 years of my working with Bruce. So, when I did this talk at Monmouth, I was still shooting film and still doing silver gelatin prints, and, during the Q&A, somebody raised their hand and said, "What do you think about digital? Have you gotten into digital? Are you gonna get into digital?" And I said, "Well, I'm aware of it, I'm sure that eventually I will, but I haven't yet."

It wasn't much past that when I got into digital, and now basically everything I do is digital. I still have film cameras that I use for special things, but the darkroom has been gone for years. I have a person that was doing my darkroom work, but

Frank Stefanko's *Darkness on the Edge of Town* cover / full frame, 1978.

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Stefanko's live shot of Bruce Springsteen performing in Gothenburg, Sweden, 2012.

FRANK STEFANKO

nowadays everything that is digital goes to my printer in Virginia. They have all my stuff on file, and I can just tell them which frame I want, in what size, and they make it pop. They know just what I want, they ship me the prints, and they are gorgeous. That brings up a subject. Between the galleries that represent me we used to do nothing but silver gelatin photographs; you know, the stuff that was developed with developer, stop bath and fixer, washed and dried and so forth and so on. Customers would buy a print, and if there were any issues with it, they would send it back and want another print to replace it, or a refund or whatever. Nowadays with the digital prints, they are perfect. Every one is perfect. So, it has really done a nice job of stopping the people from returning prints for silly little reasons.

GM: *Let's talk a little bit about the composition of your photos. I had a very different insight into your process after reading your book. I would look at all these photos of Bruce Springsteen, and I thought I was seeing all these different moods that Bruce was in. Now, after reading the book, I realize it's more him trying different things. It seems that it wasn't as organic or natural as I once thought it was by your account. Bruce liked to shape every single shot with facial expressions and emoting. Can you describe that to me in any way?*

FS: Well, it was both that which you just described, and happenstance as well. I had mentioned that it was a collaboration of two people trying to get to one goal. But yes, you are absolutely right. He did choose my photographs for *Darkness on the Edge of Town* and for *The River*, and then going forward for different projects. He had a lot of people take photographs for those albums other than me, but he felt that my work best portrayed the characters that he was writing about on those albums.

GM: *Can you take me through that initial meeting with Bruce?*

FS: When we started out, he came to my place and we sat down, I showed him some of my portfolios, we talked, and I introduced him to my family. We chatted for a while and found out that we had a lot in common. We're both New Jerseyans, we're both from working-class families, we both had Italian mothers and non-Italian fathers. We liked the Jersey Shore. We liked the same music. By the time we got done with this conversation there was a familiarity, there was an easiness about it all. So, when we got to work there was no boundary, we just got right into it. A lot of people say to me, "Wow, you get right up in their face. How do you do that?" I tell them, "Well, when you're collaborating with your subject, and you know your subject and you feel comfortable with your subject, and they feel comfortable with you, you have to be able to get into that person's eyes and get right to their soul." That's where the everything is, it's right in there, you know? You can't be afraid to get up close and do that.

So, we lit up the situation. We went to different parts of the house that we were working in, and he was giving out the characters that he wanted, and the expressions that he wanted to portray and project. And I would sometimes change it around, or I'd startle him or something, or sometimes he'd say, "Hey, gimme a good joke." He would laugh, and I'd shoot his reaction. Then he'd get serious again, or I'd have him turn his face to a certain angle and, then whatever was going through his mind and what he was doing, while he was under my direction there, he became that person. There are a lot of different looks, and if you look at the whole body of work, there is a sort of a similarity of that character that with all the different emotions that are involved, that character's still the same character, and he is still coming through.

GM: *It is very interesting that you use the word* character *a few times, because I started to realize after reading your book, and after seeing the one-man show that he did on Broadway, that a lot of the people he sings about were characters. In that Broadway show, he admitted, "I've never been inside a factory. I've never really had a job. All of these people I wrote about were just observations. I'm not really that person." A lot of people believed Bruce was that working-class guy for a long time. Was it all an act?*

FS: I wouldn't characterize it like that. Around the time he was working on *Darkness*, I was shooting him and had a stack of contact sheets. I always made duplicate contact sheets, and I gave him a stack, and I kept a stack with numbers on them. The backs of every one was numbered, so that if he needed a specific

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image, he'd say, "Frankie, contact sheet number 23, image 17 — can you just make the image little darker? Can you print that up for me?" So, we had just finished a shoot and there had been a tremendous snowstorm in New York City. I drove up from my house in South Jersey, parked in SoHo, and took a cab uptown to the Navarro Hotel, where Bruce was staying, so we could go over some contact sheets. This guy that wore the jeans and the plaid shirts and everything reaches under his bed, and he pulls out one of those magnifying flashlights, and he starts looking at all the images. And I'm saying to myself, "This guy has a lot more going on than he shows everyone." I kind of got the idea that he was pretty special even then. Although he was just starting out, he started from nothing, and he's lived the life of a guy from a working-class family, and he had a hard way to go. Most of his life, he couldn't afford a lot of things, but he was just on the cusp of greatness at this point. It was just after *Born to Run*, the great Eric Meola cover. He knew the next step, and he was on his way. He wasn't just that poor little kid anymore.

GM: *It's almost like there's a contradiction in what you see in your photographs of Bruce and the way he seems to really be. Is there a contradiction?*
FS: Somebody once said of my photographs, you know, "Was this posed out? Did you guys plan this out?" And I said, no. I said, all I was doing was seeing this young man in front of me and photographing what I saw. So, a lot of it's real. He is who he is. You know, I don't see the contradiction per se. Now, I will say this. He didn't really pursue his education in his younger days, but he is self-educated tremendously. I mean, we've gotten together a few times and he said, have you read this book? Or, hey, you gotta get this book. Or, I mean, well read. He is well versed in business, and a lot of it may have been through his association and mentor Jon Landau, who is a fantastic person for him to work with all these years. Jon guided him in many ways. He has also educated himself probably way more than most people who graduate from college; he knows a lot of things about a lot of things. He is very worldly. He's been around. And, he has a lot of A-list friends. I'm just amazed at that fellow that I was working with in 1978, and now this person in 2023 has become a different person. He has evolved, and he has evolved greatly.

GM: *I guess the contradiction that I refer to is especially in* Darkness*; the pictures are dark and kind of brooding, and I was wondering, is he like that at all? He doesn't seem to be that kind of person.*
FS: He is a person of many moods. When he is working, he can be incredibly intense almost to the point where he can wear you down. We once did a photo session that went from mid-morning to late at night and just kept going, you know? It was like, who's the first man to drop? I don't know if he got his work ethic from his father being a working-class person, or whether it's just the drive that he had internally to accomplish all the things that he wanted to do. But yeah, he can be moody, he can be funny, he can be hysterical, he can be silly. He can be all these things that you see; they're all part of what he is.

GM: *Now, going back to the early days, you said he would go through all of these contact sheets and look at all the different contacts and try and cull all of the images. How long did he typically take to choose an album cover once he was presented with contact sheets?*
FS: I don't know, maybe a week and a half, two weeks of back and forth with images from the *Darkness* sessions. He's the ultimate decision-maker, but he'll have input from whoever he is working with on the design of the album, and he will have input from Jon Landau, but ultimately it will be his final decision as to what the artwork will look like.

GM: *Did you ever get into a disagreement over a particular photo that he was considering for an album cover?*
FS: No, that would have been pretty silly of me.

GM: *I would think so, but you never know. Some photographers — and I'm not gonna mention any names — get to the point where they think it's all about them.*
FS: To this day, going on 50 years of working with Bruce, it's always been my honor and privilege to work with him. Yes, we will share ideas, we'll discuss things, but ultimately, I will always bow to his wishes regarding that.

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Stefanko refers to this photo as “The Crew” on the roof of the Record Plant , New York, NY, 1978. (L-R): Max Weinberg, Steven Van Zandt, Clarence Clemons, Springsteen, Roy Bittan, Danny Federici and Garry Tallent

FRANK STEFANKO

GM: *You mentioned earlier that you're both from similar backgrounds. Bruce wasn't exactly a household name in 1978. I know he had a big following, but he wasn't a huge megastar yet, like he became in in 1985. New Jersey is kind of a special place. It was the seat of our nation, and it's also a big pop-culture reference. Sometimes it's funny, sometimes it's a little derogatory, but it's not unknown. New Jersey is a state that everybody has an idea of, especially since* The Sopranos. *Everybody knows about the Pine Barrens, or "You're from Jersey? What exit?" You know, the garbage state, the Garden State, all that. Do you think that if all this took place somewhere else in America, it would have unfolded the same?*

FS: That's a really insightful question. I never thought of that. No, I think it had to be this way. It had to be New Jersey. In the early days, Bruce wrote about getting out and leaving all that behind. But, you know, he had a place in Los Angeles, but ultimately, he came back and thrived in New Jersey. I've been to his ranch in North Jersey several times, and he has built himself a life more than anything with his family and the people that he associates with. He has his own recording studio there, but I think more to your point, the fact that he was a North Jersey guy as opposed to a South Jersey guy definitely played into his career.

Now, he did have affiliation with Philadelphia. The great DJ Ed Sciaky had championed him and played a lot of his music in Philadelphia. So, he got a nice fan base in Philly, and in the South Jersey area, but he's a North Jersey guy. But there was a connection with Manhattan, with Lower Manhattan especially, playing some of those clubs like The Bottom Line and having access to the New York recording studios like The Record Pant and so forth. New York City, I think, added to his sophistication, and that whole urban concept. I don't think he would have gotten that anywhere else.

GM: *I totally agree with you. I cannot picture Bruce in Los Angeles, or at least I couldn't picture him when he moved here, and I was shocked when he did. When he moved back, and when he married Patti [Scialfa], I was like,* OK, now Bruce is exactly where he is supposed to be. He's back in New Jersey. He's with Patti. *He should have been with her from the beginning. That's something I really shouldn't comment on. That's somebody's personal life. But the whole relationship with you and New Jersey, because there is a lot of New Jersey in some of those photos. And I was just wondering, would those photos have worked anywhere else? You know, the band dynamic, the music dynamic, that's a completely separate thing. I'm strictly talking about your photos and New Jersey being the third character in them.*

FS: Bruce did a couple of albums when he was in Los Angeles, *Lucky Town* and *Human Touch*. I know the photographer, David Rose, and David did those two albums, and to me, it wasn't Jersey Bruce, it was L.A. Bruce, it was Hollywood Bruce. Don't get me wrong, they were great photos, and David's a great photographer, but I can see what you're talking about.

GM: *Speaking to you saying his photos are great — and your photos, of course — if you took Bruce out of your photos, like the "Corvette Winter" photo, or the ones taken on your porch, if you take Bruce out of those photos and put your accountant in there, are they still great photos?*

FS: Oh, (laughs) I don't think so.

GM: *It's good that you realize that, because a lot of people think the photos are great because of the person that's in them, but they're really not. They're great subjects and they're conveying something great, but they're not necessarily great photos. What do you think make a photo great?*

FS: Well, when you take a photo, you're not just capturing the artist, but how you surround the artist and in what position and what's coming out of that photograph to you, I think that is what makes it a great photograph. It's the combination of a great subject and how he is, the continuity and the composition of the photo and the lighting and everything else that helps to portray the image of that artist.

GM: *"Lighting" was the word I picked up on there because I wanted to know what you thought constituted a great photo outside of it being a photo of Bruce Springsteen. I know you're doing a lot of nature photography lately, so overall, what constitutes a great photo for you?*

FS: You know, people photography is very similar to me if I'm standing out in the desert out in Monument Valley shooting one of the mittens that you've seen in all those John Wayne movies, I still photograph it the same way as I would photograph a person. The lighting has to be right. It has to be able to project out, all the facets of what makes a good piece of art. When you look at a photograph, you don't want your eye to go into the photograph, and then something juts out and, and takes your eye out of the format, out of the page. You want the viewer to be able to circle within that format, keep your eye moving within the format, to have it project out. You don't want the light directly on the subject, you don't want the light directly behind the subject; it has to give that subject depth, and it has to make that subject pop.

I'm thinking of some of the rooftop pictures I did of Bruce in 1978 on the top of the Record Plant on West 45th Street. When you look at the photos, you know that he's on a rooftop. You see buildings out of focus in the background, you see maybe a ladder going up or these pipes coming out of the roof and all that, but what hits you is Bruce. So, I don't know if I can explain it.

GM: *You have a very acute sense of what you're doing. And not only that, but what the person who's going to see the photo and what they are going to see in it, which is an amazing skill.*

FS: At the very least, I have the intelligence to look at the ones that just don't make it, and not print them. Everybody has clunkers.

GM: *Yes, but a lot of people see different things in photos. I have a ton of photos that people look at and say, "This is a great photo," but I'll find things like, the guitar's pointing the wrong way, I cut off the head of the guitar, all kinds of things. I'm sure that you've looked at your photos and said the same thing, haven't you?*

FS: Absolutely. I took a picture in March where I was standing in the pit in at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia when Bruce was appearing there. I was standing with Jon Landau and Danny Clinch came over, and Danny likes to move around, shoot from different angles and areas. I kind of plant myself in one spot. I've always planted myself in the pit in one position, just way to the right of Bruce's microphone so that when I'm shooting on an angle across, I'm not getting the microphone in his face all the time. I'm getting his face clear, and I know what his moves are, so I can work around that on the action stuff. But I took this one shot of Bruce

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when he turned around and it was his backside, he had his guitar slung over his back, and in his back pocket just emerging out of his back pocket was his harmonica.

And that was it, that was the whole image. And I said, "This is not really what I usually do, but I really like this," and I posted it on my Facebook page, and I got a lot of people leaving a lot of different comments. Some people said, "There's a little bulge there in the front of his pants," and I think, "Oh shut up!" Most people said, that's the essence of Bruce Springsteen; his guitar, his harmonica, his jeans, and, and that was it. Everything else was blacked out from the lighting on the stage. So, I really liked that shot. Most people agreed with me, but some, some people just saw other things, I guess.

GM: *That's great, and I think you're reading my mind, because my next question was going to be about shooting live photography of Bruce, because you stated in your book that you were shooting a show at the Spectrum in Philadelphia. And you knew the choreography, which allowed you to know exactly when to shoot, where to shoot from, et cetera. My question to you is, when you know the choreography of an artist that well, have you ever felt you've missed a show even though you were there, because you were behind the camera doing your job, knowing you had to capture that image and then you couldn't remember the show?*

FS: Well, at that particular show, I'm watching Danny work, and he is singing every lyric as he's moving around. Whatever song Bruce is doing, he is mimicking it word for word. He has seemingly memorized every lyric. I can't do that. I know the lyrics, I know the songs, but I'm more into the music, the power of the music, and as I said, I knew the choreography from the shows. There were people on Facebook that said, "I went to five shows in Europe, and they were essentially all the same shows," and I'm thinking, "Hey, then why did you go to five shows? You only need one. Let somebody else see it." I'm 77 years old, and I'm out there in the pits with all the young people and some other people my age, too. I didn't feel like rocking when I went there. I was feeling like I just wanted to go sit down. But once that show starts, whether it's two hours, three hours, four hours, Bruce's energy gets inside of you. Many people that have gone to a Bruce Springsteen show for the first time in their lives have come out and said, "Why haven't I done this before?" This is incredible. To answer your question, I'm into the music and I'm feeling the music, so I don't feel as though I've missed a minute.

Stefanko attends the "From Darkness To A Dream" photography exhibition opening at the Morrison Hotel Gallery on October 14, 2010 in New York City.

GM: *It's funny that you mentioned some go to five Springsteen shows and bitch that it's the same thing five times.*

FS: I can't understand it, and I want to explain to these people. I said, "Look, Bruce has got a set list, and it could be 30 or 40 different songs. The band rehearses these songs so that they can get them right." He does change it up, he'll add one or two different songs on a night, but essentially, it's the same show. You can't do 40 songs this night and 40 new songs the next night. That's incomprehensible to even consider somebody trying to do something like that. If you've been going to these shows, you know what you're going to get, just take it for what it is. It's a Springsteen show. If you don't want to see the same thing every night, don't buy tickets for five different shows.

GM: *What's your rig of choice when shooting live?*

FS: I've got quite a few cameras, but how much can you carry around your neck? So, when I go to a concert, I basically just take the Canon and the Leica. I basically do everything with the Leica. I mean, I may not get the biggest digital image like I do from the Canon, but it's serviceable. I can get nice shots out of that and blow 'em up nicely.

GM: *Today you're shooting more for enjoyment now, aren't you?*

FS: I'm just as happy being out in the desert, or up in the Canadian Maritimes or in Hawaii or Polynesia or somewhere in the swamps of Jersey, which I go to a lot because I live there. I'm just as happy in these open spaces, in these places where there's not a big footprint of man where I hope that these places will be preserved for centuries to come. I'm very much at peace out there. I admire the beauty and I'm able to make some very nice photographs that reflect that,

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 98]

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BY GILLIAN G. GAAR

The Beatles in 1963.

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FROM RED AND BLUE TO NOW AND THEN

It's been a long and winding road to get to the release of "Now and Then," the latest reunion single by The Beatles, finally released over a quarter of a century after Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr first began working with a John Lennon demo that his widow, Yoko Ono, had given to them. In fact, to get to the start of the journey, you have to go back over another quarter of a century, to a time when The Beatles were still a working entity and the project that would eventually evolve into *The Beatles Anthology* was first coming together.

It was in 1968 that Denis O'Dell, the head of Apple Films (part of The Beatles' Apple Corps. empire), began collecting film footage of the group from around the world for a documentary that would tell the band's story. Neil Aspinall, Apple's general manager, eventually took over the project, which was given the provisional title *The Long and Winding Road*. In early 1970, it was announced that both *Let It Be* and *The Long and Winding Road* would be released later in the year. *Let It Be* was duly released in May. But though the fan magazine *The Beatles Book* reported as late as October 1970 that *The Long and Winding Road* would be released in time for Christmas, the film failed to appear.

Two years later, in November 1972, there was another announcement of the film's imminent release, this time under the unimaginative title *Ten Years in the Life of The Beatles*. But again, the film remained unreleased. Instead, it sank into a kind of limbo. Lennon would make reference to it in interviews (it was now back to being called *The Long and Winding Road*). It was said that Harrison gave a copy of Aspinall's rough cut to Eric Idle to use as a reference for his 1978 Beatles parody film *All You Need Is Cash* (more commonly known as *The Rutles*). And on November 28, 1980, Lennon mentioned the documentary again, this time in a deposition regarding Apple's lawsuit against the producers of the tribute show *Beatlemania*, saying, "I and the three other former Beatles have plans to stage a reunion concert, an event to be filmed and included as the finale to *The Long and Winding Road*."

After Lennon's death, the film was shelved for a decade. But in 1990, Aspinall, now Apple's CEO, suggested to the remaining Beatles and Ono (representing Lennon's estate) that they revisit the project, and work on the film began again in 1992. The project had now evolved from a single film to a television series, with expanded video (and later DVD) releases to follow. Harrison insisted on a name change, *The Long and Winding Road* being too associated with McCartney's song of that name. It was decided that *The Beatles Anthology* was safely neutral.

Initially, no tie-in record release was planned. Indeed, in 1993, Beatles producer George Martin stated there were

The Beatles during a photo session, St Pancras Old Church gardens, London, July 28, 1968.

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And they said it couldn't be done.

When *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* was reissued in newly remixed form in 2017, there was great excitement about the possibility of remixing the rest of the band's catalog. *The Beatles* and *Abbey Road*? Obvious contenders. *Please Please Me* and *A Hard Day's Night*? Not so much.

But director Peter Jackson's MAL audio technology has allowed those early tracks to be "demixed" with surprising results. And that's one reason Beatles fans may want to pick up the latest reissues of these albums (henceforth known in this review as the "Red Album" and "Blue Album"), even if you own the original 1973 versions, the 1976 repressing, the 1978 versions on colored vinyl, the first CD versions from 1993 or the remastered CDs from 2010.

The albums have also been expanded, adding 12 more tracks on the "Red Album," and nine more on the "Blue Album." Was this necessary? It does make them more comprehensive (especially the addition of George Harrison tracks), though the additions are sure to prompt discussion. "Twist and Shout" diverges from the "no covers" policy of the original albums, but it was a signature song from The Beatles' early era, so it makes sense. But "You Really Got a Hold on Me" over, say, "All I've Got to Do"? Only one song from *Beatles for Sale*? "Glass Onion" over "Sexy Sadie"? Let the debates begin!

The mixes are drawn from a variety of sources, none going further back than the 2015 *1+* release, meaning both sets have been given a complete sonic revamp. The tracks from *Revolver* on are mostly drawn from the newly remixed reissues that have come out since 2017, so it's the new mixes that will capture most of the attention here.

The biggest surprise may be the difference remixing (or demixing) has made to the early songs. The lead vocals on tracks like "I Saw Her Standing There," "Twist and Shout" and "Roll Over Beethoven" are now centered, making for a more compelling performance; Starr's drums also have a greater punch. The new mixes of the *Rubber Soul* songs will whet your appetite for that deluxe edition, purported to be next in line for the full remix treatment; on "Norwegian Wood," for example, Lennon's lead and McCartney's harmony vocals have a fresh clarity. There's a richness to these new versions that bode well for the remix.

There are also some new remixes on the "Blue Album." Most noticeably different is "I Am the Walrus"; the final minute, with its chaotic fade out, brings completely different sounds to the forefront, with the Shakespeare quotes having seemingly disappeared, is one the purists will have the greatest objection to. There are also new mixes of "Lady Madonna," with McCartney's voice more in the forefront, and a more boisterous, thumping "Revolution" (though some may find the drums too heavy-handed).

Also included is the latest single, "Now and Then." The sonic improvement over the previous "Threetles" tracks, "Free As a Bird" and "Real Love," is quite impressive; it feels like a real song, not an overly spruced-up demo. It's clearly the best of the three posthumous creations of "Beatles" songs, and a more fitting final single than "Real Love." It's a soulful, bittersweet number, the elaborate production (including a very Beatlesque string arrangement) contrasting nicely with the stripped-down simplicity of the band's first single, "Love Me Do," which was paired with "Now and Then" on a variety of single releases (vinyl, cassette, CD). And while leaving off "Free As a Bird" and "Real Love" means the sets no longer feature every U.K. A-side, speculation is that demixed versions of the tracks are being saved for a future project (the 30th anniversary of *The Beatles Anthology* in 2025 perhaps?).

Both sets continue to provide a good overview of The Beatles' music, and remain perfect entry points for future generations or for casual fans who aren't interested in picking up the band's entire catalog. And fans who already have all the previously released mixes might still wish to pick these up to get a sneak peek at what future reissues may hold.

(In addition to CD and vinyl, Dolby Atmos mixes are available on digital/streaming platforms.)

— Gillian G. Gaar

no outtakes in archives worth releasing: "There are one or two interesting variations, but otherwise, it's all junk. Couldn't possibly release it!" That was destined to change, when it was decided that the band's studio outtakes were not only not "junk," but that there were enough of them to help fill up three double albums, alongside live and radio show tracks. And as it turned out, the albums would include new Beatles music as well.

A story that ran in *Goldmine*'s January 21, 1994 issue announced that a "knowledgeable insider" claimed that McCartney, Harrison and Starr had reconvened the previous August to record new songs, including a tribute to Lennon, with George Martin producing. None of that turned out to be true. But coincidentally, just two days before the story was published, steps had been taken to bring the "Threetles" (as they would soon be called) together in the studio once again.

On January 19, McCartney was in New York City to induct Lennon into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. He also confirmed to the media that he, Harrison and Starr had agreed to record something new for the *Anthology,* saying,

The Beatles during a photo session in Twickenham, April 9, 1969.

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"We know we can't do anything better than The Beatles, but for old time's sake, we thought it would be nice to give it a whirl."

But instead of recording background music, as had originally been considered, the three decided they would instead record new songs — and credit them to The Beatles. While in New York, McCartney had received a cache of Lennon's demos

THE LAST BEATLES SINGLE: "NOW AND THEN"

"To hear John's voice — that's the thing that we should cherish."

– George Harrison

"It's like John's there … it's far out."

– Ringo Starr

"Hope you enjoy it. If you don't, too bad."

– Paul McCartney

By now, most Beatles aficionados are most certainly familiar with the details regarding the recording, demixing, remixing and release of what is being marketed as "the last Beatles song," a late-'70s John Lennon composition titled "Now and Then." Depending on whose version of the truth one believes, Lennon's lead vocal was either created via AI or AI is not involved in the equation whatsoever. George Harrison either disliked the song and never wanted it to be released or was simply put off by the quality of Lennon's hiss-marred cassette demo. It's the last Beatles song or it's not really a Beatles song at all because it doesn't "sound like The Beatles," and it's not up to the standard of their classic tunes. It's a Paul McCartney-fueled ego trip/cash grab or it's an elegant tribute to his late musical partner.

It's all too much.

The truth of the matter is that there really is no truth of the matter — much of what is being bandied about regarding "Now and Then" is nothing more than speculation and conjecture at best and misinformation at worst. (And we didn't even mention the pundits who are griping about Harrison's relatively minimal participation in the song and using that as an argument against calling it a Beatles number. Apparently, these folks fail to realize that all four Beatles didn't play on every single Beatles track. Sigh…)

I get distinct yet subtle Beatle vibes from "Now and Then," even though it does not come off as overtly "Beatley." The verses are as catchy as the chorus (always a Beatles hallmark); Ringo's drum fills are classic Starr-time; Giles Martin's string arrangement (with a little help from his friends, including McCartney) is stately, not syrupy; and overall, the general feel seems to lie somewhere between "Real Love" and Harrison's "When We Was Fab." (And by the by, I'm one of those who feel that they were correct in excising Lennon's bridge from the original demo; it sounded a bit clumsy and forced to these ears.)

Another thing "Now and Then" does quite effectively is tug on the heartstrings: hearing a clear-voiced Lennon sing "Now and then…I miss you" with Starr and McCartney harmonizing alongside him…damn. It's haunting, it's emotional, it's simultaneously beyond sad and somehow strangely uplifting (particularly when one recalls that Lennon's last words to McCartney were reportedly, "Think about me every now and then, old friend").

But for me, the definitive litmus test for "Now and Then" is this: It's a total ear worm, and I have been unable to dislodge it from my memory since I first listened to it over a month ago. It's a warm and fitting way for The Beatles to put a bow on their recorded legacy, naysayers be damned. And the music video that accompanies it … wow. Creative, spirited, and touching. Just like The Beatles.

But that's just my version of the truth; for the definitive version, I refer you back to the quotes about "Now and Then" from George, Ringo and Paul at the top of this article.

— John M. Borack

from Ono for the Threetles to work with. Though later admitting she had thought of the tracks as "private," she also considered that "The Beatles have become a very important power to many people. I felt that for me to stand in the way of that reunion would be wrong. So I decided to go with the flow."

The actual Threetles sessions began on February 11, 1994, at McCartney's studio at his East Sussex home and ran for the next two weeks. Martin wasn't asked to produce, perhaps because he'd already made it clear he didn't like the idea of a posthumous "reunion." "I kind of told them I wasn't too happy with putting them together with the dead John," he later told *Rock Cellar* magazine. "I've got nothing wrong with dead John, but the idea of having dead John with live Paul and Ringo and George to form a group, it didn't appeal to me too much. In the same way that I think it's OK to find an old record of Nat King Cole's and bring it back to life and issue it, but to have him singing with his daughter is another thing." Nonetheless he conceded, "I think I might have done it if they asked me, but they didn't." It was an account that differed from what was said at the time; that Martin didn't produce the sessions due to his failing hearing (which overlooked the fact that his hearing was still considered good enough for him to produce the *Anthology* CDs).

So, at Harrison's insistence, Jeff Lynne (who'd worked with Harrison in the Traveling Wiburys and had co-produced his 1987 album, *Cloud Nine*) was chosen to produce. Starr admitted there were some tensions to begin with. "We've been in and out of favor with each other for the last 20 years," he told *Record Collector*. "Once we get the [crap] behind us, we all end up doing what we do best, which is making music." The track they spent the most time on was "Free As a Bird." Lennon had recorded demos of the song in 1977, and one reason it was chosen was that it was unfinished, meaning the other Beatles could contribute to it and make it more of a "band" track. The three also did some work on "Now and Then" (also demoed by Lennon in 1977) and "Grow Old With Me" (demoed in 1980).

News about the session broke two days later, generating much excitement and the usual wild speculations (it was said the Threetles would play with Lennon's two sons at a mega concert held at New York's Central Park). The next reunion session was held March 20 at Harrison's home studio in Henley-on-Thames, with a little more work done on "Now and Then" until Harrison called a halt. The three reconvened the next day at Harrison's home to shoot sequences for the *Anthology* (most of which turned up on the DVD release), but while they're seen jamming together, they recorded no new music.

Further sessions were held in 1995, all at McCartney's home studio. On February 6 and 7, the three worked on "Real Love" (demoed by Lennon in 1980). The song was a more completed number, making the Threetles more like "'sidemen' to John" in McCartney's words, though he hastened to add the experience of working on it was nonetheless "joyful." In a nod to the past, McCartney played the same harmonium used on The Beatles' "We Can Work It Out"; some sources also say he played the same celesta used on the *Abbey Road* song "Because."

There was also a bit more work done on "Now and Then," both at the February sessions and again on March 20 and 21, despite Harrison's disinterest in the track. "It didn't have a very good title, it needed a bit of reworking," McCartney later told *Q*, "but it had a beautiful verse and it had John singing it. But George didn't want to do it." (McCartney was more forthcoming in a later *New Yorker* profile, saying Harrison thought the song was "f*cking rubbish."). Aspinall further explained in a statement, "The song has been partly recorded in 'embryonic form' before it got put on the back burner and that's where it stayed. The song was never intended to be released."

The final sessions were held on May 15 and 16, 1995. Work on "Real Love" was completed, and the three then turned to work on a McCartney-Harrison number, "All for Love," the first time the two had co-written a song since "In Spite of All the Danger" back in 1958. But old grievances resurfaced. "When Ringo said, 'I've done my bit,' and left George and I to do it, we had a little bit more tension," McCartney later recalled. The "tensions" finally erupted into an argument, which brought the session, and the Threetles reunion, to an end. As Harrison later complained, "It's just like being back in The Beatles" — which wasn't where he wanted to be.

"Free As a Bird" was given a dramatic world debut, with the song's video playing at the end of the first episode of the *Anthology* television broadcast, November 19, 1995. Despite its hopeful title, there's a mournful quality to the song, especially in the newly completed verses, which look back at a failed relationship. But the video was a visual treat, working in numerous references to Beatles songs and films, making it a fun trivia hunt. The single received mixed reviews, but still reached No. 6 in the U.S., No. 2 in the U.K. The song would win a Grammy for Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group, with the video winning the Grammy for Best Short Form Music Video.

"Real Love" was premiered at the end of the second *Anthology* episode on November 22, 1995, and released as a single the following year, on March 6, 1996. The gentle, dreamy ballad generated some surprising controversy when BBC Radio 1 declined to play it, stating ,"It's not what our listeners want to hear." After complaints, the station played a special hour of Beatles music, concluding with "Real Love." The song reached No. 11 U.S., No. 4 U.K.

And that, we were told, was that. When *Anthology 3* was released in October 1996, Apple issued a statement: "The end has finally arrived. The Beatles are no more. The official word is that Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr will never play together again as a group, and they have decided that there will be no more singles issued from their back catalogue."

Well ... not so fast.

As the success of the 1994 *Live at the BBC* and *Anthology* releases had shown, there was great interest in unreleased Beatles material. There would also be increasing attention to remixing their music. Both *Help!* and *Revolver* received new stereo mixes when they were first released on CD in 1987. The *Yellow Submarine Songtrack* (1999) featured remixes of the songs featured in the film

THE BEATLES U.S. SINGLES DISCOGRAPHY

Forever volatile though it is, the market for Beatles records is certain to explode once again after the first "new" single in 27 years has been released. No values are offered here, then — for that, we need to wait and see what happens. Collectors hoping to fill the gaps in their collection, or maybe get started on building one, are advised instead to simply shop around for the best deals they can find. And if condition is not your chief priority, you'll certainly find some bargains.

To get you started, however, what follows notes every Beatles 45 released in the U.S. between 1962 and their breakup in 1970, together with a selection of interesting subsequent releases. (But not reissues.)

For a complete listing, including label variations etc, please see the most recent edition of the *Goldmine 45pm Record Price Guide* (Eighth Edition, 2018).

45s

APPLE

- 2276 Hey Jude/Revolution (26 August 1968)
- 2490 Get Back/Don't Let Me Down (5 May 1969)
- 2531 The Ballad of John And Yoko/Old Brown Shoe (4 June 1969)
- 2654 Something/Come Together (6 October 1969)
- 2764 Let It Be/You Know My Name (Look Up the Number) (11 March 1970)
- 2832 The Long and Winding Road/For You Blue (11 May 1970)
- NR 7243 8 5849770 Free As a Bird/ Christmas Time Is Here Again (1995)
- NR 7243 8 58544 7 7 Real Love/Baby's In Black (1996)

ATCO

- 45-6302 Sweet Georgia Brown/Take Out Some Insurance On Me, Baby (1 June 1964)
- 45-6308 Ain't She Sweet/Nobody's Child (6 July 1964)

CAPITOL

- 5112 I Want To Hold Your Hand/I Saw Her Standing There (26 December 1963)
- 5150 Can't Buy Me Love/You Can't Do That (16 March 1964)
- 5222 A Hard Day's Night/I Should Have Known Better (13 July 1964)
- 5234 I'll Cry InsteadI'm Happy Just To Dance With You (20 July 1964)
- 5235 And I Love Her/If I Fell (20 July 1964)
- 5255 Matchbox/Slow Down (24 August 1964)
- 5327 I Feel Fine/She's a Woman (23 November 1964)
- 5371 Eight Days a Week/I Don't Want To Spoil the Party (15 February 1965)
- 5407 Ticket To Ride/Yes It Is (19 April 1965)
- 5476 Help!/I'm Down (19 July 1965)
- 5498 Yesterday/Act Naturally (13 September 1965)
- 5555 We Can Work It Out/Day Tripper (6 December 1965)
- 5587 Nowhere Man/What Goes On (21 February 1966)
- 5651 Paperback Writer/Rain (30 May 1966)
- 5715 Eleanor Rigby/Yellow Submarine (8 August 1966)
- 5810 Strawberry Fields Forever/Penny Lane (13 February 1967)
- 5964 All You Need Is Love/Baby, You re a Rich Man (17 July 1967)
- 2056 Hello, Goodbye/I Am the Walrus (27 November 1967)
- 2138 Lady Madonna/The Inner Light (18 March 1968)
- 72144 All My Loving/This Boy (1971)
- 4274 Got To Get You Into My Life/Helter Skelter (1976)
- 4347 Ob La Di Ob La Da/Julia (1976)
- 4612 Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band / With a Little Help From My Friends (1978)
- B-5107 The Beatles Movie Medley (1978)

DECCA

- 31 382 My Bonnie/The Saints (Tony Sheridan and The Beat (23 April 1962)

MGM

- K 13 213 My Bonnie/The Saints (27 January 1964)

SWAN

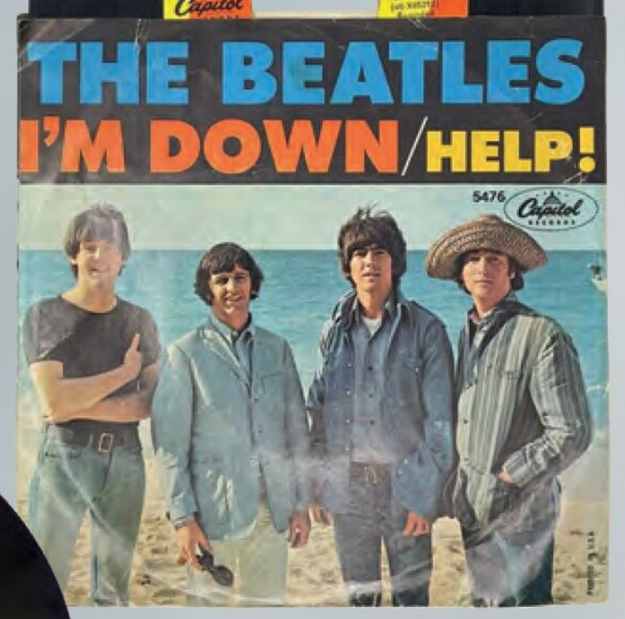
- 4152 She Loves You/I'll Get You (16 September 1963)
- 4182 Sie Liebt Dich/I'll Get You (21 May 1964)

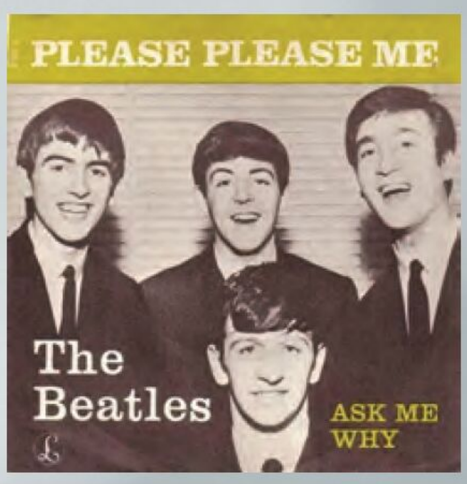
TOLLIE

- 9001 Twist and Shout/There's a Place (2 March 1964)
- 9008 Love Me Do/PS I Love You (27 April 1964)

VEE-JAY

- VJ 498 Please Please Me/Ask Me Why (25 February 1963)
- VJ 522 From Me To You/Thank You Girl (27 May 1963)
- VJ 581 Please Please Me/From Me To You (3 January 1964)
- VJ 587 Do You Want To Know a Secret/ Thank You Girl (23 March 1964)





(except "A Day in the Life," not included on the record), while *Let It Be... Naked* (2003) also featured remixes of material recorded during the sessions. The *1+* CD/DVD set (2015), featured song remixes; on "Free As a Bird," Harrison even sings a different line ("The life that we once knew" became "The love that we once knew"), and Lennon's comment "Turned out nice again," played backward on the original track, is now heard playing forward.

And then came even deeper dives into the archives. In 1995, McCartney had claimed, "Me and George Harrison are talking about the next album being called *Scraping the Bottom of the Barrel*." But in the past seven years, that "barrel" has produced unexpected dividends. Beginning with a 50th anniversary reissue of *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* in 2017, deluxe editions of *The Beatles* (2018), *Abbey Road* (2019), *Let It Be* (2021) and *Revolver* (2022) have all featured remixes of the original albums and plenty of previously unreleased material. A similarly expanded *Rubber Soul* reissue seemed obvious. And those who've wondered if band's earlier, less complex material would benefit from remixing can now look to the latest reissues: the *1962-1966* and *1967-1970* compilations.

Oddly, there was no Beatles greatest hits/best-of collection released in the U.S. in the 1960s. That changed following the release of the *Alpha Omega* in 1972. The unauthorized four-album set of Beatles songs (with a few solo Beatles tracks mixed in) had been compiled by the New Jersey company Audiotape Inc., which simply sourced the songs from the American Capitol albums.

Hoping to avoid scrutiny, the set was only available through mail order (for $13.95), and proved to be so successful, two further collections were released (both, confusingly, named "Volume 2," though they each had different track listings). But the releases eventually came to the attention of The Beatles camp, and on February 16, 1973, then-manager Allen Klein filed a lawsuit. *Alpha Omega* was withdrawn, and two months later the *1962-1966* and *1967-1970* double-album sets were released on April 2 in the U.S. (April 19 in the U.K.), advertised as "the only authorized collection of The Beatles." The albums featured the A-side of every U.K. single, a few U.S. single A-sides (e.g., "Yesterday"), assorted B-sides and album tracks, giving a well-rounded overview of the group's work.

In one of his last interviews, Lennon said he'd asked George Martin to oversee the releases to provide a measure of quality control (nonetheless, the U.S. and U.K. versions featured different mixes of some songs). He also claimed he'd suggested the cover art idea, which cleverly used the cover shot from the *Please Please Me* album, and an updated photo The Beatles had taken of themselves in 1969 by the original photographer, Angus McBean, in the same location, EMI's then-headquarters at Manchester Square in London (the 1969 shot was originally planned for the cover of the proposed *Get Back* album). Due to the different colors of the albums' borders, *1962-1966* became known as the "Red Album," and *1967-1970* as the "Blue Album."

Both sets hit the Top 10 in countries around the world, with the "Blue Album" topping the chart in the U.S. The collections have remained popular over the years, offering those who didn't grow up during the 1960s Beatles era a handy primer of the group's work. And when later released on CD, they reentered the charts. In 1993, the "Red Album" reached No. 2 in *Billboard*'s Top Pop Catalog; the "Blue Album" topped the same chart. For the 2010 remastered editions, the "Red Album" again reached No. 2 in the Catalog Albums Chart and No. 32 in the Top 200; the "Blue Album" hit No. 1 in the Catalog Albums Chart and No. 29 in the Top 200.

The 2023 expanded editions of the albums feature an additional 21 tracks — including "Now and Then." Though set aside over a quarter of a century ago, McCartney had never lost interest in completing the track, and mentioned it in numerous interviews over the years, clearly considering it unfinished Beatles business.

Then, in the wake of *The Beatles: Get Back* series, McCartney asked Giles Martin (George Martin's son, responsible for all the album remixes from *Sgt. Pepper* on) and series director Peter Jackson if Jackson's MAL audio software, used to "demix" audio for the programs with spectacular results (conversation that had been muddled could now be heard clearly), could be used on the Lennon demo. Told that it certainly could, work on "Now and Then" recommenced in 2022. Lennon's voice could now be extracted from the lo-fi demo; the guitar work that Harrison had done when the Threetles worked on the track in the mid-'90s was also used. McCartney and Starr recorded new parts, with McCartney adding a guitar solo emulating Harrison's style; "My tribute to George," he says in the documentary short *Now and Then — The Last Beatles Song*.

The song's completion was largely directed by McCartney. "When Paul gave it to me, he'd changed the song structure and written the song, and done the guitar solo and pretty much done the vocals and guitars," Martin told *Rolling Stone*, "and I just basically added some extra bits along with him." Those "extra bits" included a string arrangement, recorded at Capitol Studios in the Capitol Records tower in Los Angeles; it was the last session at the studio before the building was closed for extensive renovations. Martin also mixed backing vocals from the original Beatles songs "Eleanor Rigby," "Here, There and Everywhere" and "Because" throughout the track ("I just thought if The Beatles were around, they'd probably sing harmonies at a certain point in the song," he explained).

And Martin continues his work remixing The Beatles catalog on the new "Red" and "Blue" albums, demixing (along with Sam Okell) all the pre-*Revolver* tracks, giving a preview of what future deluxe editions of the albums yet to be reissued will sound like. This makes the "Red" and "Blue" reissues more than just another means to attract a new generation of budding Beatles fans; they're also a teaser for what's on the way.

But "Now and Then," released on November 2, is meant to provide a closure, as "the last Beatles song." We'll see how that plays out; recall that the same thing was said when *Anthology 3* was released. Could more surprises emerge from the archives someday? Possibly. But for now at least, "Now and Then" provides the capstone on a remarkable body of work that has entranced the world for over 60 years — and looks to continue to do so far into the future.

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The Beatles, Twickenham Film Studios in 1965.

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PRODUCER **GILES MARTIN** DISCUSSES THE RELEASE OF THE BEATLES' NEW "NOW AND THEN" SINGLE AND THE REISSUE OF THE RED AND BLUE COMPILATIONS.

BY KEN SHARP

Giles Martin attends the private view of "Paul McCartney Photographs 1963-64: Eyes of the Storm" at the National Portrait Gallery on June 26, 2023, in London, England. The exhibition featured over 250 unseen photographs, taken by McCartney at the height of Beatlemania, displayed for the first time.

DAVE BENETT/GETTY IMAGES FOR MPL COMMUNICATIONS

GETTING THE BEATLES BACK ONE LAST TIME

Get back indeed. On November 2, 2023, more than 25 years after the release of two new Beatles songs for the group's multipart *Anthology* documentary series ("Free As a Bird" and "Real Love," which featured surviving members Paul McCartney, George Harrison and Ringo Starr lending accompaniment to sparse John Lennon '70s-era demos), comes what is being described as the last Beatles song ever, "Now and Then." During the Jeff Lynne-helmed reunion sessions, McCartney, Harrison and Starr spent a little time laying down some ideas over Lennon's demo of "Now and Then" before work ceased. Decades later, employing Peter Jackson's demixing technology, which allowed clear separa-

tion of Lennon's vocals on his rudimentary demo, "Now and Then " — produced by McCartney and Giles Martin with additional production by Lynne — is given the grandiose Fab Four treatment. Using Harrison's acoustic and electric guitar from the aborted mid-'90s session, alongside newly recorded contributions from McCartney, Starr and a sparkling string arrangement by McCartney, Martin and Ben Foster, The Beatles are back one last time.

[Record collector alert: The single will be issued on cassette and 7-inch and 12-inch black vinyl and colored 7-inch vinyl variants (light blue/clear/marbled blue and white). The cassette and marbled 7-inch vinyl are limited-edition Beatles Store exclusives.]

Also, manna from Fab Four heaven arrived a week later on November 10, 2023, with newly expanded versions (2-CD/4-CD/6-LP configurations) of the band's commercial blockbusters, *1962-1966* ("The Red Album") and *1967-1970* ("The Blue Album"). Both benefit tremendously from the same demixing technology first used for the group's critically acclaimed Jackson Disney documentary, *Get Back*. Hearing the extraordinary sonic improvements — especially in early Beatles tracks like "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "She Loves You," "A Hard Day's Night," "I Feel Fine," "Eight Days a Week," "Help!' and others — will be a revelation to most Beatles fans.

Join us for a "fab" conversation with producer Giles Martin, who shares insight on both historic releases.

GOLDMINE: *First, can you lay out the back story behind "Now and Then"?*
GILES MARTIN: Well, this was a track that was worked on during the "Free As a Bird" sessions that I wasn't aware of. The song was in Paul's vaults or Paul's studios because Paul, George and Ringo worked in Paul's studios when they recorded it way back then. And through the birth of the technology that we worked on during *Get Back* and the demix technology, Paul originally went to Peter Jackson to get him to work on stuff for his concerts so John [Lennon] would be singing with him on "I've Got a Feeling" during his concert. And I think from there, Paul asked Peter whether he would look at "Now and Then," and he started working on it in his studio and came up with the arrangement and came up with things like the guitar solo. I was working independently on remixing *Red Rose Speedway* for him. I knew he was doing this because his engineer, Steve Orchard, is a really good friend of mine and we collaborate on Paul's material, so he sort of flagged this might be coming up. So I was aware of it, but I wasn't really aware of the song at all. Paul played it to me, and he said, "How do you feel about working on this and mixing it?" I ended up not mixing it because of the other work I was doing. But we discussed "Now and Then," and I gave him my thoughts, which I'm quite happy to be wrong about, and that's how it happened.

GM: *What was the shape of the song when you received it? How much was kept from what was initially done? And specifically, how much had George Harrison recorded on those preliminary sessions?*
GILES: Well, George had laid down acoustic and electric guitar, both rhythm guitar tracks. The guitar solo section in the track was written and done by Paul before he came to see me. It was done as kind of a tribute to George in a way. It's Paul being George, if you like, (laughs) and he was thinking, *OK, what would George have done here?* And actually, that ran through the whole sessions where it was pretty obvious that Paul was really missing his friends and trying to respect them and do what they want him to do.

GM: *Was it you that asked Ringo to play drums, or Paul?*
GILES: I said to Paul, "We should get Ringo to rerecord the drums," and he agreed. I think he'd already spoken to Ringo, or Ringo was aware he was doing the track. I phoned up Ringo on a Tuesday night or something, and Ringo says, "I know why you're phoning me. You want me to play drums on a Beatles song," and I said, "Yeah." So Paul must have already phoned him. I had the multitracks to send him. He went, "Fine, I'll listen to it and I'll play on it and send it back to you." It's as simple as that. He said, "I'll play

The Beatles in the recording studio in 1963.

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The Beatles in the recording studio in 1967.

it twice, I'll listen to it, and I'll just play along with the song." He doesn't play with a click track. He just listens to a song and he plays it.

GM: *Was there anything that Paul had done at the initial sessions with Jeff Lynne at the helm that was kept, or did he redo everything?*
GILES: I think we kept his acoustic guitar; he played acoustic guitar with George, and I think there's video of him doing it with George. I think that was kept. He redid the bass and piano.

GM: *Were you at those sessions when he was redoing the bass and piano, or were you only in attendance with Paul for the string sessions?*
GILES: No, I wasn't. The sessions he was doing, he did that in his own studios, and he did those things before he came to me. I think I said to him, "It sounds beautiful, Paul," and he looked at me and he gave me his look like, *What are you going to say now?* That kind of thing. I said, "Well, it might be a good idea if we have a look at doing some strings and maybe some bv's [background vocals], and then we improved the quality of John's voice." I think I made it a bit more sparse at the beginning. I had a bit of a bigger entry to it originally, a bit more of a "Free As a Bird" type entry, but I thought that once John's voice is clear and clean and he sounds so great, and it's unmistakably John, let's start with John.

GM: *Was much of John's piano kept from his demo when you were able to separate it using the demixing technology, or did Paul replay it?*
GILES: Paul redid the piano because it had to be redone, because the format of the song changed. But I think that's OK. If anyone's going to replace a Beatle, it should be a Beatle.

GM: *I agree. Getting to work on what is now being hailed as the last Beatles song ever, there had to be a mixture of excitement and trepidation. What did you want to do, and what were the things you wanted to avoid doing?*
GILES: Well, OK, I had Paul for a start. What we talked about was trying not to be cheesy with anything. I did the string arrangement, I'm ripping off my dad quite a lot, (laughs) but it's not a Beatles tribute record, it's a Beatles record. We didn't tend to repeat ourselves with the arrangements and stuff like that. So we were concerned about just doing the song justice. I remember working on *Love* with Yoko [Ono], and she said to me, "The thing about John, he's just a voice now," and I understand that because the first voice I heard when I went to remix *Sgt. Pepper* was my dad's. So I understood what she means. They can't defend themselves. And what was really exciting for me was watching Paul's total respect for his band members in the process of doing this. The strings are quite staccato. They're quite "Eleanor Rigby," if you like, and Paul was like, "OK, the rhythm that's being played by George, can you just isolate that? I want to hear what George is doing. I want to make sure that we are playing exactly the rhythm he is playing and that we follow that on the record." Because as you pertinently asked the question, what's George doing on this? And so it's really important that his contribution is really respected and that we're not washing things out with too much color.

GM: *Your father was a master at string arrangements. What were some of the things that consciously or unconsciously that you brought to that string arrangement giving a little bit of a nod to his brilliance?*
GILES: Well, economy, really. It's funny, we did actually start off with a bigger string section in the room. And on the video, I think you can see a bigger string section that I ended up using on the track. On the track, it's just a double string quartet in the end, apart from the guitar solo, which has a bigger, more sort of "Golden Slumbers" vibe. There's like a line in the guitar solo, which is basically similar to the viola line that he put in "Golden Slumbers." There's a line at the very end of the guitars, which is a triplet line, and which is a very "I Am the Walrus" triplet type thing. They're going all the time, so there are conscious nods. But as Paul says, "I'm not trying to do stuff for the sake of it. I'm doing stuff because it's The Beatles." And if we're going to do that, if you're going to do that with any artist, you must do it with the artist that did it in the first place.

GM: *And you cut the strings at Capitol*

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Studios in Los Angeles with Paul present?
GILES: We cut the strings at Capitol, yeah.

GM: *And none of the session players there knew exactly what this was for, correct?*
GILES: It was a strange day, but yeah — nor why would anyone even suspect it was for a Beatles session, is the question. It's funny, the best way of hiding something is putting in plain sight.

GM: *What's interesting about "Now and Then" is if they had the demix technology back then with "Real Love" and "Free As a Bird," that would have opened up a whole world of possibilities. Is there a chance in the future that you would want to attack those songs utilizing that same technology to improve them?*
GILES: No, I don't think so. And it would be down to Jeff Lynne. As you know, Jeff is a great producer and a great choice for that anyway. You have to bear in mind that also, George was very much alive and Jeff was his best friend and made those decisions based on that. And a lot has been said, you know, we can't wait for you to get your hands on "Free As a Bird" and "Real Love." I suppose Jeff or someone could work on just improving the vocal.

GM: *Well, let's jump into the "Red" and "Blue" albums. Hearing the improvements in sound on the earlier Beatles material is impressive employing the demix technology. Have there been further advances in that technology that has made the process even better since it was used for the* Get Back *film while working on the "Red" and "Blue" albums?*
GILES: Yeah, definitely. I mean, it's something we've been working on. Peter's technology was originally being used in the *Get Back* film for cleaning up dialogue. I heard some of the stuff and I said to this guy, Emile [De La Rey, sound editor], who was the person working on it, "Can we apply this to music and The Beatles' multitracks?" One of my jobs, like my dad, was to recognize opportunities for new technology being used. And so, we applied it to *Revolver*, and the results were amazing. We tweaked a bit as the machine learned. We learned as well what was right and what was wrong. And then the ultimate challenge is taking something like "Twist and Shout," which is essentially a heavily compressed two-track recording where everything is on one side and trying to separate a very compressed guitar, bass and drums track into separate entities, and that in itself is improving. But we got to the stage with this where I think it's incredibly exciting. It is without question the most innovative mixing we've done for The Beatles. The funny thing is, it's going to get slightly overshadowed on the short term by "Now and Then" because that's the story for me. But this is a game changer to hear things like "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "A Hard Day's Night," "She Loves You," "I Saw Her Standing There" and "All My Loving" the way we're hearing them. What I love about it is I played them to one person and they were like, "This sounds great. This is the remaster." I went, "No," and pressed the button and he went, "Oh my God. What's happened? It's like an MP3." And I'm going, "That's the original." And he said, "That there is the original. Where's the drums gone? Where's the punch gone in the track?" Well, we tend to fill things in in our brains, but newer listeners don't. I think we retain the character of everything. I don't think people are going to listen to these records and say, "Well, there's a completely new version of the song, which I don't recognize." That's key for me, but I think they do sound remarkable, I really do. I'm really happy with them.

GM: *We've discussed in previous conversations touching on your reluctance to jump into the earlier Beatle albums for some of these super deluxe editions, whether it's* With The Beatles *or* A Hard Day's Night *because of the limitations of technology advancements. But now with this demix technology, and judging by what you've done on the earlier Beatle tracks for the "Red" and "Blue" albums, are you much more optimistic about tackling those early records?*
GILES: Absolutely. I'm not going to say I'm going off to go and work on them now, but it just means we can. That's the thing. And there's no point just doing this for the sake of it. And I know this because I've been playing around with this technology for a long time to see what we can do. This isn't like we've been waiting for this in order to make it happen. I remember looking at tracks from *Rubber Soul*, for instance. I'm not doing *Rubber Soul* at the moment, but for the song "And Your Bird Can Sing," because that'd be challenging, and trying to use demix technology and it didn't sound or feel right. And now we're in a situation where it does, and it feels like The Beatles, and it is The Beatles, and that's super exciting. I think it's super exciting for Beatles fans as well.

GM: *Giles, from the earlier material that you tackled on the "Red" and "Blue" records, what were the ones that you were most worried about tackling that you ultimately succeeded improving upon?*
GILES: So "Twist and Shout" is a good example — I'm really happy with that one. But that was really challenging. It was really challenging because on the original record, don't forget these weren't actually meant for stereo. On the stereo you have John in the right hand side and the whole band on the left hand side. But you have this sort of weird sort of ghosting and plate reverb and spill from the cans [headphones] in with his vocal that's coming in and out, and it kind of gives the song a sort of character to it that I was worried about us losing. And what we do now with this technology, and I don't know if people know this, but we'll put the band back in the room again. So once I've separated the guitar, bass and drums, I will then set up speakers and microphones back in Abbey Road Studio Two and have the band play back in the room again. And what that does is it creates the right ambience for the track. And so with "Twist and Shout," I played around, funnily enough with putting the room back into the right hand side because otherwise it didn't sound as good, it didn't sound as interesting as the original record. It's things like that. You're constantly trying to work out why this stuff sounds so great and how can we try and not change it but improve it in a certain way. I remember mixing "All My Loving" and it just came together so quickly. It took like an hour and a half and it was just like, *Oh my God, this sounds great.* See, I remember the "Red" and "Blue" albums really, really well because I listened to them. They were my era. With "All My Loving" it was like I can suddenly hear there's Ringo in this. The thing is like, Ringo is such a great drummer, but on the early records, you're just basically getting a lot of cymbal splash and no kick drum, and now we've got kick drum and it's

what they would have heard in the room. But of course what's interesting about this is that I'm rewinding the compromises they had in technology when they made the record to make it sound more like when they played it. It's as simple as that. And that's what's exciting for me. Ringo always says we're just a bunch of punks, and now they sound like a bunch of punks.

GM: *Well, that's interesting you mentioned being able to bring out much more of Ringo's sound in the early records that we wouldn't have heard otherwise. You can say the same for Paul. I'm hearing bass lines that I never was able to discern from those early sessions.*

GILES: Yeah, and I think the guitars are a bit more punchy. We try and work on everything so it just has just a bit more presence to it. Now we can have more bass on. It simple as that. There's less concern about the needle jumping out of the groove. It's always the concern in those days.

GM: *I know fans were hoping for a* Rubber Soul *box this year, and it's been rumored that an* Anthology *could be in the works, too. Can you give us hints on what could be coming next?*

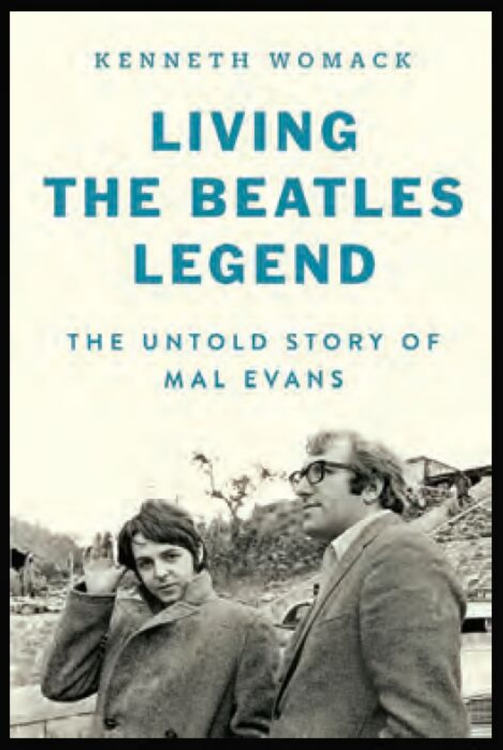
GILES: No is the answer. (laughs) But I can absolutely honestly say I'm not working on anything at the moment. That's all I can say.

GM: *Lastly, you've recently done some work with another important "B" band, The Beach Boys. I heard there may be an Atmos version of* Smile *you might be working on. Is there any truth to that?*

GILES: No. I mean, I'd be delighted to do something. I really enjoyed doing *Pet Sounds*, and I think people liked it. I was really happy with that. It was just nice. It's funny doing both *Pet Sounds* and *Revolver*. It's bizarre, but yeah, it was an honor to do it.

THE BOOK *LIVING THE BEATLES LEGEND: THE UNTOLD STORY OF MAL EVANS* IS EXPLAINED IN AN INTERVIEW WITH AUTHOR **KENNETH WOMACK.**

BY KEN SHARP



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IN THE BEATLES SPOTLIGHT

The Beatles on their way to a memorial service for their manager Brian Epstein, October 17, 1967. From left to right: Patti Boyd, Mal Evans, George Harrison, Neil Aspinall and Paul McCartney.

ESTATE OF KEITH MORRIS/REDFERNS

Very few people penetrated The Beatles' sanctum. Mal Evans was one of the fortunate few brought into the Fab Four's incredibly tight inner circle where he served a professional role as a hardworking roadie and personal assistant who catered 24/7 to the band's whims, and he was also a trusted and loyal friend. Remarkably, during his tenure with the band, Evans was a first-hand witness to arguably every historic moment in Beatles history; he's almost "Zelig" like in his ubiquity of presence. From their formative days playing Liverpool's Cavern Club to the zenith of Beatlemania on global tours spanning 1964-66, the historic meetings between the Fab Four and Bob Dylan in 1964 and a year later with Elvis Presley, landmark recording sessions (he contributed lyrics uncredited to several Beatles songs), The Beatles' feature films *A Hard Day's Night, Help!, Magical Mystery Tour* and *Let It Be*, the climactic January 1969 rooftop concert and more. Upon the group's split in April 1970, Evans continued to work closely with all four Beatles in various capacities up to his untimely death in 1976.

A new book, *Living The Beatles Legend: The Untold Story of Mal Evans*, penned by Kenneth Womack, provides the first examination of Evans' life and journey with The Beatles and beyond. Beautifully written and exhaustively researched, utilizing Evans' own copious diaries, paperwork and rare imagery alongside over 200 new interviews, *Living The Beatles Legend* shines a well-deserved spotlight on a lesser known hero in The Beatles universe.

GOLDMINE: *Detail the back story behind how this book came about*
KENNETH WOMACK: In 2020, I was contacted by Gary Evans, via a mutual friend, filmmaker Simon Weitzman. Gary was interested in bringing his father's story to life. Naturally, I was interested — who doesn't love Big Mal? While I knew that Mal had assembled a personal archive, I had no idea about the wide range of materials he had accumulated. A few weeks after I signed onto the project, Gary sent the materials to New Jersey, and I was positively blown away.

GM: *Going into the project, what were your expectations, and what were some of the major surprises you uncovered?*
KW: Honestly, I figured I could get the requisite 80,000 words out of tracing Mal's life history. Gary Evans is such a wonderful, kindhearted and generous guy. I planned to write the biography if for nothing else than for Gary, who is so gracious. But after he sent me the materials, I couldn't believe my eyes and ears. One of the most incredible surprises was the amount of recorded material that Mal left behind, including several hours of him reading his memoirs.

GM: *Describe the materials you had access to — diaries, letters, photos, etc.— that helped shape the scope of the project.*
KW: The archive includes diaries from 1963 to 1974, along with a series of notebooks — some quite voluminous — that he kept through his final days. He also amassed several thousand photographs. I realized early on that much of the project would involve organizing such a large and diverse collection. Fortunately, I hold a professorship, and I've been able to provide archival opportunities for students, both undergraduate and graduate at Monmouth University, to help organize and identify the materials.

GM: *What were the most important finds for you in terms of visuals, paperwork?*
KW: There are some candid photos of The Beatles that I can't wait to share with music fans. They serve to humanize Mal and the band's story. As I remind my students every semester, The Beatles' story is an indelibly human one, and Mal's archive really underscores this facet. The paperwork has proven to be fascinating.

Mal was a packrat of sorts, and he kept numerous receipts and other ephemera that help to shape the story.

GM: *How did Mal wind up working for The Beatles?*
KW: Mal had been a Cavern regular since 1961, serving as a bouncer since at least 1962, so he was a known quantity among

Mal Evans dismantles Ringo Starr's drum kit after the concert in Washington, D.C., on February 11, 1964.

(opposite) Evans posed in a recording studio.

MIRRORPIX VIA GETTY IMAGES

the band members. He demonstrated his mettle, though, when he subbed for Neil Aspinall during the famous windscreen incident in January 1963, proving to what great lengths he would go on the boys' behalf. Later that year, when they realized they needed a second roadie, Mal was the logical — and perfect — choice.

GM: *The Beatles were a tight-knit unit who rarely let anyone inside the inner circle, along with manager Brian Epstein, Mal and Neil Aspinall were brought into that rarified air. Beyond his capabilities as a minder for the band, discuss how he became a trusted friend?*
KW: As I like to tell my students, nobody does it alone. Artists — whether they be The Beatles or the Brontës — need trusted confidantes and folks whom they can count on, no matter what, to be in their corner. Mal and Neil were those guys for The Beatles. Mal proved, time and time again, that he was there through thick and thin, that no task was too big or too small.

GM: *Characterize the traits and skills Mal had that made him a perfect fit for working for The Beatles.*
KW: As George said, "He liked to serve." Helping out was in his blood, and The Beatles found themselves at the center of an unimaginable fame. It's hard to imagine a better compadre for them to have at the vortex of all of that energy. He was patient, kind and he didn't mind being the fall guy when the chips were down. And he loved the boys like brothers to boot.

GM: *For Mal acting in service of others was a noble pursuit. At what point later did he get fed up with that?*
KW: It is clear after the onset of Apple Corps that Mal might very well have fulfilled more significant duties on The Beatles' behalf. But they were loath to see him give up his day-to-day duties as their roadie and jack-of-all-trades. This built up a resentment for Mal, who wanted desperately to prove himself to them.

GM: *Was there a member for whom Mal was closest?*

George Harrison, Ringo Starr and John Lennon posed behind the bar at the Wimbledon Palais in South London on December 14, 1963. Beatles road manager Mal Evans stands behind Starr.

MARK AND COLLEEN HAYWARD/REDFERNS

KW: Interestingly, Mal's relationships with the bandmates shift over time. He was certainly closest to Paul for several years. McCartney was an absolute hero in Mal's eyes. He certainly grew closer to John and Ringo as time moved on. In the latter years, it was definitely George. Harrison listened closely to Mal in terms of the roadie's hopes and dreams, and he really helped to make those milestones happen for Mal, including professional songwriting and production. If you asked Mal, though, I am certain that he would not necessarily have placed one Beatle over another.

GM: *Tell about the diaries Mal kept, the secrets and insight they reveal, and how you employed them while working on the book.*
KW: They are an incredible resource in terms of tracing the group's story, as well as his own development in their employ. The insights that they yield are numerous, especially when it comes to tracing his impressions as their incredible story unfolds.

GM: *Are there events in their history that Mal failed to document in his diaries that were a disappointment for you?*
KW: Only once. For the most part, Mal never fails to capture the key moments in the band's story. But during the week when Lennon asks for a "divorce," the diary is strangely silent. It may have been simply too much for Mal to put pen to paper, given such unhappy tidings. Or it could have been as simple as he was honoring their agreement not to say anything about the impending breakup.

GM: *"There are seven levels"— share the back story behind this quote Mal took down from Paul. After getting turned onto marijuana by Bob Dylan, The Beatles became hardcore pot smokers. Discuss the system Mal and Neil Aspinall devised to ensure the band could enjoy their reefer madness — a "doctor's bag" was always on hand.*
KW: The Beatles' tentative first steps into drug usage began with the famous "seven levels" incident with Dylan. Mal and Neil became adept at satisfying the boys' growing desires for weed. Not

The Beatles step down off the stage at 1963's New Musical Express (NME) 4th Annual Poll-Winners' All-Star Concert at the Empire Pool in Wembley, London, on April 26, 1964. (L-R): Ringo Starr, John Lennon, Paul McCartney (waving to fans) and George Harrison. Beatles roadie Mal Evans reaches one arm out to Lennon.

MARK AND COLLEEN HAYWARD/REDFERNS

only did they develop a system wherein they would substitute pot for tobacco in cigarette cartons, but in later years they even purchased a machine so that they could shrink-wrap the cartons before The Beatles traveled overseas.

GM: *In terms of groupies, echoing a practice popularized in the '70s, Mal was responsible for procuring women on the Beatle tours.*
KW: Mal and Neil were known to exist on the front lines for women attempting to "meet" The Beatles. While The Beatles are never thought of in the same vein as, say, Led Zeppelin or The Who when it comes to rock and roll hijinks, there is little doubt that they were besieged by willing young women throughout their touring years and beyond. To suggest anything different would be naïve.

GM: *Mal is the channel swimmer in their film,* Help!
KW: For Mal, enjoying a turn as an actor was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. He held somewhat secret dreams about becoming a star in his own right, and working as an actor seemed like as good a shot as any for making that happen. For the rest of his days, he would enjoy being accosted by fans on the street who would ask him for directions to the White Cliffs of Dover.

GM: *For the group's appearance on* The Ed Sullivan Show *in 1965, Mal had worries about John's condition.*
KW: During the run-up to The Beatles' '65 appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show,* Mal came to John's aid during a drug-induced panic attack. Over the years, he developed a sixth sense about the boys' predicaments. Fast forward to January 1969, when Mal rescued John during a bad heroin interaction during a Canadian TV interview.

GM: *How did the band's triumph at Shea Stadium in 1965, a few short years from them playing The Cavern in Liverpool, play out for Mal?*
KW: In just a few short years, Mal observed as the boys outgrew the available technology for presenting a live concert to larger and larger crowds. The available gear was outpaced by rock's shift into the arena and stadium eras, forcing Mal to find new means for prepping The Beatles for their various tours.

GM: *Mal finished a book called* Beatles—USA *in 1965. Detail the essence of the project and why it was not published.*
KW: Incredibly, the news service that brokered the book was unable to place it with a buyer. I have spent considerable time trying to run down the background with the news service and the attendant circumstances. Unfortunately, the folks who brokered the book's composition are no longer with us. Mal held onto the manuscript, which he intended to place in the center of his memoirs to cover the 1965 North American tour and to detail their August meeting with Elvis.

GM: *Mal was a huge Elvis fan. I found it fascinating to read the chapter about Elvis meeting The Beatles in August of '65, an historic meeting that Mal meticulously documented in his diaries.*
KW: Mal adored The King. He was Mal's gateway rock drug, to be sure. Mal went to great lengths to document that fabled evening in Bel Air. It would also leave a profound imprint on Mal, when Elvis and the boys held an impromptu jam session. To his great embarrassment, Mal didn't have any picks, a failing that he would never forget. To remedy the situation, he broke up some plastic cutlery that he found in Elvis' kitchen to create some makeshift picks. But he was beside himself that he didn't have any plectrums handy.

GM: *Didn't Elvis contact Mal in the '70s? He also experienced his dream of seeing Elvis live at the Spectrum in Philadelphia in 1971.*
KW: The King was known to call Mal at home. They truly hit it off. Mal not only saw Elvis in Philadelphia, but later in Las Vegas. For Mal, it was a dream come true.

GM: *The Beatles' visit to Manila on the summer of 1966 stands as one of the most traumatic events in their history. Speak about Mal's memories.*
KW: Mal was certain that he was on the verge of being killed that day. The violence that he and the boys experienced while attempting to flee the terminal was horrific. When he was escorted off of the plane, Mal was bleeding from the leg. As he passed Brian Epstein on his way off of the plane, he said, "Tell Lil, Julie and Gary that I love them."

GM: *For the group's Memphis concert in 1966, the band were receiving threats on their lives. How does Mal remember it?*
KW: For Mal, the firecrackers popping off while the boys were onstage in Memphis was yet another wakeup call about the darker sides of Beatlemania, which had begun to make themselves known during the 1965 North American tour. As the years would show, the sublime beauty of The Beatles' music would be countered by a dark underbelly — witness the calamitous 1966 world tour, Lennon's murder and Harrison nearly losing his life during a 1999 knife attack.

GM: *Mal notes in his diaries cited in the book that the* Rubber Soul *sessions were tense. Share his reflections and how in situations like these he manufactured a way to help defuse tensions —"Hey, look at the dummy."*
KW: Mal was always happy to play the fool if it meant bringing the boys together. In this instance, he intentionally fumbled a tray so that they would direct their ire at him and away from each other.

GM: *Mal came up with an ingenious way to capture John's voice underwater on "Yellow Submarine."*
KW: Mal provided a condom as a means for waterproofing a microphone so as to simulate the sound of John singing underwater. Condoms were among the various and sundry items that Mal carted around in his doctor's bag, the name he anointed to the parcels he would carry around to address the boys' every want and need.

GM: *Mal appeared on a number of Beatles recordings; give us a highlights rundown.*
KW: Mal was up for anything. The clear highlight to my mind was the "Yellow Submarine" session in which Mal took up a Salvation Army bass drum and paraded around the studio. Of course, fans love his turn as anvil player at Twickenham in January 1969!

GM: *How did Mal's role change when The Beatles ceased touring?*
KW: If anything, he was in even greater demand. The band put in long hours in the studio, and Mal was a key aspect of making that happen. Being able to tend to their every need allowed them to work

longer and longer hours. At some level, he made a key difference in their creation of their late period masterworks such as *Pepper,* The White Album and *Abbey Road.* Mal developed an extensive Rolodex that meant he could procure anything that they needed at virtually any hour of the night.

GM: *In the book, you detail Mal's uncredited songwriting contributions on various Beatles songs, namely "Here, There and Everywhere" and "Fixing a Hole."*
KW: By John and Paul's own testimony, they actively solicited input from others. Songwriting and artistry are social productions, and so there's little doubt that other hands would come into play when it comes to the voluminous accomplishments in the Lennon-McCartney songbook. The input of others — whether it be Mal, Neil or John's childhood chum Pete Shotton — takes nothing away from their unique achievements as artists. Like I said, nobody does it alone. Even The Beatles!

GM: *Both Paul and Mal take credit for coming up with the name "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band"— what's your take?*
KW: I believe that it was the product of their collaboration. Paul welcomed input from others throughout his writing career, and clearly Mal was handy when it came to such activities. He was pretty well-read and good with a turn of phrase. He was also fascinated with military history, so it makes a certain kind of sense. Ringo credits Mal with fully coming up with the name, but to my way of thinking it had been prompted by the brainstorming that he and Mal were carrying on during the flight back to the U.K. from Kenya.

GM: *In the book it's revealed that Mal co-wrote "Sgt. Pepper" with Paul? Does this info come from Mal's diaries? Ringo went on to affirm it.*
KW: Mal writes proudly about his efforts at sharing in the boys' songwriting efforts, especially "Sgt. Pepper," with which he felt a sense of pride, having been there at the song's gestation. Mal writes often about working closely with Paul and others vis-à-vis lyrics, which Ringo later affirmed in the case of "Sgt. Pepper."

GM: *Paul and Mal came up with the concept for* Magical Mystery Tour.
KW: Together, Paul and Mal clearly enjoyed fertile conversations about musical ideas and concepts. Mal would never have suggested that his talent was equal to Paul's, although he was clearly proud of being a key part of brainstorming sessions, as was Neil, about musical directions for the band.

On board an airplane at Speke Airport, Liverpool, in December 1963, Ringo Starr has his seat belt fastened by a flight attendant while manager Brian Epstein and road assistant Mal Evans look on.

SAYLE/MIRRORPIX VIA GETTY IMAGES

GM: *Discuss how in the film* Get Back *there's visual evidence of Paul asking Mal for input on "The Long and Winding Road"?*
KW: It is such a lively moment, remind-

Paul McCartney, with Beatles assistant Mal Evans, returns to London Airport, April 11, 1967. McCartney and Evans had visited California and Denver (where McCartney's girlfriend Jane Asher celebrated her 21st birthday while in repertory).

DAILY MIRROR/MIRRORPIX VIA GETTY IMAGES

ing us about the relationships among Mal and The Beatles. They trusted him implicitly, as well they should, and the scene during the composition of "The Long and Winding Road" is such a perfect example of their easy and close relationship.

GM: *Why didn't Mal receive the promised songwriting credit, and was that omission rectified financially?*
KW: While I couldn't find any evidence for receiving financial composition, I believe that Paul found a way to make it right for him. I am happy to report that Mal's widow received residuals from time to time. While Mal would have enjoyed receiving songwriting credit, it is important to remember that our thinking about songwriting is very different now than it was back in those days. "Lennon-McCartney" was the biggest thing going, and certainly a key aspect of their fame. We viewed the act of creation differently in those days. In the present, everyone seems to get a piece of the prize. I've seen contemporary songs with literally dozens of co-writers listed.

GM: *Fill us in on how Mal was able to keep the police at bay while The Beatles were performing on the rooftop in January 1969.*
KW: One of the most memorable aspects of the rooftop concert involved the arrival of Metropolitan Police Constables, who threatened to pull the plug on the whole shebang. As Mal's diaries and manuscripts demonstrate for the first time, Mal had been placed under arrest. This was not surprising, given the constables' realization that Mal had been putting them off throughout the concert, waylaying them so that The Beatles could keep playing as long as possible.

GM: *Post-Beatles breakup, delineate Mal's ongoing role working for all four Beatles.*
KW: Given the nature of their split, which pitted Paul against the other bandmates, Mal worked steadily on behalf of John, George and Ringo into the mid-1970s, stage-managing their LPs and being a general jack-of-all-trades. He moved to L.A. in 1974 to be closer to John, George and Ringo, who were working in Southern California at the time.

GM: *Discuss Mal's involvement with Badfinger, him producing their huge hit "No Matter What," and how that working relationship was sabotaged by the band's manager Bill Collins.*
KW: Mal's interactions with Badfinger were some of the most heartbreaking of his career. And there is no story more tragic in rock history than Badfinger's. Mal had a special connection with the Welsh band, and he was determined to make their career happen in a big way. I believe that Allen Klein holds a lot of the blame for not allowing Mal to continue working with the band with whom he had delivered a Top 5 international hit in "No Matter What." It was the height of cruelty by Klein to preclude Mal from continuing with them, and Bill Collins, who was known to be envious of Mal's relationship with Badfinger, didn't help matters.

GM: *Discuss Mal's frustration as he tried to branch out as a producer and songwriter and The Beatles were stuck in looking at him as*

their minder and servant. How did this affect Mal?
KW: For Mal, this was the essential dilemma: Any aspirations that he held were always tempered by the ways in which others would profile him as merely being the band's roadie, even, at times, the bandmates themselves. Later, when he wanted to branch out into other aspects of the music business, there is little doubt that this profile held him back. It's important to note that he had accrued several successes, namely, producing a Top 5 hit for Badfinger and composing a song that was included on the bestselling *Ringo* LP.

GM: *Recount the contentious July 1970 meeting with John, Phil Spector and Allen Klein and Mal in attendance which shockingly led to violence on Klein's part against John and Mal.*
KW: The meeting made for an incredible moment of violence, as Klein slapped Lennon and beat Mal when they began to question his efforts on the band's behalf. It was a harbinger of things to come as Klein looted Apple, proving Paul's admonitions about the manager in the process.

GM: *Why did Mal consider taking care of things for the John Lennon Plastic Ono Band solo album sessions so traumatic?*
KW: For Mal, it was personally difficult to witness John in the throes of his post-Arthur Janov experiences. His emotional pain was troublesome for Mal to behold.

GM: *For 1973's* Ringo *album, share the backstory behind "You and Me (Babe)," a song Mal co-wrote with George Harrison.*
KW: Mal composed two songs for Ringo's consideration, with "You and Me (Babe)" being selected to close out the *Ringo* LP. Mal had actually begun writing it, years earlier, in Rishikesh. George helped him put the finishing touches on it and championed it with Ringo, netting Mal a tidy payday in the bargain in terms of royalties.

GM: *Mal was in attendance when John and Paul jammed in 1974 and also hung out the next day at a beach house John was renting in Santa Monica, California. What insight did Mal shed on this?*
KW: For Mal, it was one of the tenderest moments of his life. Seeing John and Paul together again touched his heart. He absolutely gushed about how much it meant to him.

GM: *What was Mal's Superpower, and what was his fatal flaw?*
KW: I believe that it was one and the same. He made himself completely vulnerable to the people whom he loved. He was able to love deeply, but that level of vulnerability made it possible for him to be hurt rather easily. He was unable to steel himself against life's vicissitudes and conundrums. In the end, it cost him when he was unable to keep his head straight and his emotions in check.

GM: *This book sheds new insight on Mal's tragic death. In the foreword by Mal's son Gary, he cites Mal's death as being purposeful suicide by police. Where do you stand on the issue?*
KW: Having read the police reports, along with Mal's last will and testament, it is clear that he wanted to die, to go out "in a haze of bullets," as he once said. When his wife made her first tentative move toward divorce, Mal's worlds collided, and he was dead within a matter of days of her impending appointment with a divorce attorney. He simply couldn't see his way forward. To him, it meant that he would no longer see his kids and that he had let Lily down, which he had done time and time again of course. It was a case of suicide by cop. On January 4, 1976, Mal determined that he wouldn't live another day. And he didn't.

GM: *Many myths surrounded Mal's book being lost along with his ashes; set the record straight.*
KW: Mal had completed his memoirs in full. They were collected, along with his effects, in the bankers boxes that he left behind. Mal himself had written the book, which he dictated to a stenographer who compiled the manuscript from the recordings he made and her steno books. He didn't have a ghost author, nor did he have a collaborator. When he died, the book had already been completed. It wasn't due with the publisher until February 29th, so he had plenty of time to spare. There were two covers under consideration, and he had already selected illustrations.

GM: *There's a very touching letter reproduced in the book that John sent Mal's family after his death. You report in the book that John cried unconsolably when he heard about Mal's passing. Out of all The Beatles, did John take it the harder than the others?*
KW: In this instance, I simply have more evidence about John's reaction. They had recently spoken, and there was testimony about John's flood of emotions when he learned that Mal died. I would hazard a guess that all four bandmates were fairly equally distraught.

GM: *Do you feel the book vindicates Mal in some way and is able to assign a deeper meaning to his accomplishments?*
KW: I think that, in many ways, this biography underscores what we already knew about Mal — that he adored the boys, that he was fun-loving, that there was nothing he wouldn't do for them. But at the same time, it makes clear that Mal was no drudge. He wasn't a cypher who was lucky to be in their midst. They enjoyed great good fortune when he joined their ranks, making a difference for them over and over again, especially in the service of their work, which will last through the ages.

GM: *This is the first installment of your projects about Mal Evans. Fill us in about what we can expect with the follow-up book.*
KW: I'm very excited about the second book, which will be a compendium of Mal's diaries, notebooks and manuscripts. It will be chock-full of photographs and drawings, and it will give readers a chance to ferret out their own Mal stories, to go down the rabbit hole and seek out new discoveries of their own. I'm truly looking forward to seeing what other folks learn when they make their own deep dives into Mal's voluminous archives.

GM: *Lastly, here's a hypothetical question. If you had a chance to ask three questions, questions of which you were unable to find the answers in your research, what would you ask him?*
KW: I would ask him for his first-hand accounts of the band's breakup, for sure. He saw and learned things that we're still only just beginning to understand. His post-breakup memories would be useful, too, especially in terms of working with the other three with the band's future in disarray. I would be most interested in his final interaction with Paul, an event about which Mal had been so ebullient. What were their future plans together? Was he planning to work with Neil on the reformation of Apple? ●

MUMY Melodies

Once the child actor who played *Lost in Space*'s Will Robinson, **BILL MUMY** talks about his career-spanning work as a singer-songwriter and the 24/7 immersion into rock and roll.

BY KEN SHARP

While Bill Mumy first came to prominence as a child actor through his memorable guest roles on *The Twilight Zone, Alfred Hitchcock Presents, Bewitched* and most notably as the character Will Robinson on the popular '60s series *Lost in Space,* what many in the public may not know is of his 24/7 immersion into rock and roll and namely his extensive career spanning work as an artist, songwriter and musician. Immensely prolific, over the past five decades Mumy has released a succession of solo albums and worked with the likes of America, Shaun Cassidy and others. He was a member of the duo Barnes & Barnes, who scored a hit with their wacky paean "Fish Heads." In 2023, Mumy is part of a dynamite trio, Action Skulls, which also features Vicki Peterson of Bangles and John Cowsill of The Cowsills/Beach Boys fame. *From a Running Hors*e, their impressive new album, is a tour de force filled with strong song-writing, tight instrumentation and magical harmonies. Now let's pull the curtain back and learn more about the musical side of Bill Mumy.

Bill Mumy at the Hollywood Bowl in 1965.

(above) American singer-songwriter John Stewart with Bill Mumy in 1970.

(top right) A recent photo of Mumy onstage with John Sebastian of Lovin' Spoonful fame.

(right) Mumy performing with the band America.

HENRY DILTZ

GOLDMINE: *You're an accomplished actor, writer, artist who's released many albums; is there anything in the creative arena that Bill Mumy can't do that he wished he could?*

BILL MUMY: Ha! Too many to list. Mainly, I wish I were more comfortable traveling and being on the road these days. I don't enjoy airports, planes, buses and hotels much. I love to perform, but I haven't gigged in three years now. Every week I post a live performance of an original song on my Facebook page to keep my chops up. The Monday Morning Mumy Music Moment. Beats being delayed at LAX or being in a broken bus in the snow.

GM: *When writing for an Action Skulls record, is there a creative mindset for coming up with material that is suitable for the band?*

BM: I'm lucky to be partnered with two talented people in Action Skulls, and I'm blessed with the muse continuing to visit me. I have a lot of songs and ideas always percolating. With the Skulls I will often share bits and pieces of ideas and welcome their input to collaborate and finish them so it's a group thing. If I have a song or write one that immediately feels like it would be a good Action Skulls song, I'll share it and see if they dig it. I don't mind getting quite dark thematically at times on my own solo projects or in past Barnes & Barnes projects, but for the Skulls, since big-time harmony is usually a part of most everything we do, I hope to bring a more positive vibe to the material.

GM: *Describe what each member brings to the table as singer-musician and record maker.*

BM: Well, Vicki and John are fantastic singers with great ears as well as being terrific musicians. John is an excellent drummer, and he plays piano and guitar as well. Vicki's a fine musician and she's a real thinker. She likes to work things out and get them really right. John and I are a bit more impulsive, and we tend to work quicker than Vicki. Vicki takes time to polish. Since Rick Rosas, our original bass player, passed away, I've been playing all the bass parts on our tracks, which I enjoy doing although of course we all wish Rick were still here as he was a truly brilliant musician and a sweet, soulful, easygoing, funny guy. He is missed big time. Robby Scharf played bass when we gigged. I tend to see the potential of the Skulls in the studio sans limitations, and the three of us have played everything on the new album, *From a Running Horse*, with the singular exception of the mighty Dave Pearlman, who added pedal steel on one track.

GM: *In a perfect world, choose an artist/group the band would like to share a concert bill.*

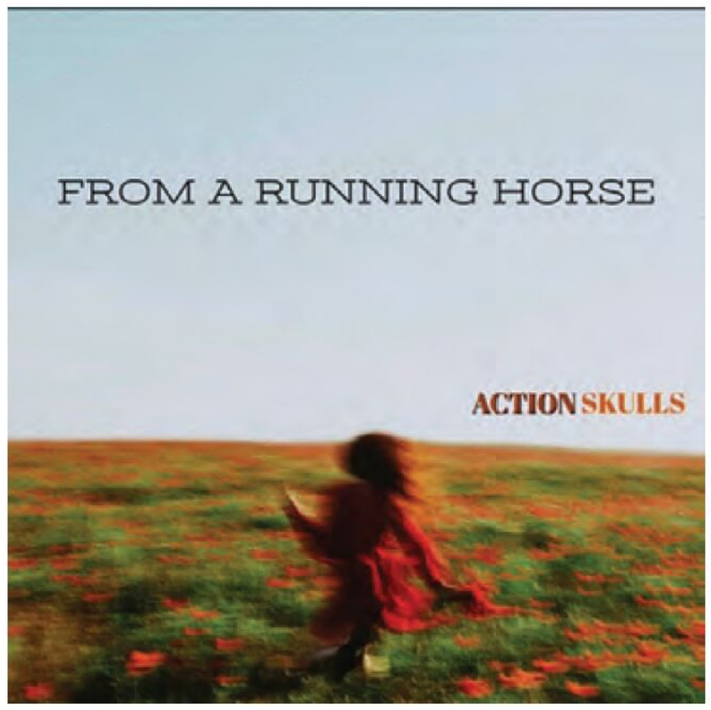
BM: Oh, man. That's really hard. For Action Skulls to gig and represent the recordings we'd either have to find three other player/singers and rehearse for a good long time to duplicate the records. Or we'd have to strip it all down to a couple acoustic guitars, which I'd be happy with. It wouldn't match the arrangements on the albums, but I like a less-is-more approach. If the songs are good and honest, a couple guitars and harmonica and percussion should work. I mean, the three of us have a nice vocal blend, but I don't know if that would satisfy an audience that wanted to hear live what they hear on the albums. I just don't know ... Emmylou Harris or Gillian Welch would be cool to gig with the Skulls, I think.

GM: *For someone unfamiliar with the group and you provide them access to listen to this album, what's the first track you would want to start out with so they could understand the ethos of the band?*

BM: "Find the Good." It's written by the three of us, and it's a real good representation of the essence of Action Skulls. It's "Canyon Rock." A lot of harmony, jangly guitars, strong rhythm drums and bass, and a lyric that is honest and means something.

GM: *Action Skulls are comprised of three very strong, distinct and talented personalities. As singers, writers and record makers, how do you finesse that in a creative situation where everyone is able to have their voice heard?*

BM: Well, the whole point of being in a band is to find that blend of everyone's talents and combine them into something cohesive that's unique. I've made a lot of solo albums, and will continue to do that. But being in a group, where everyone is equal, is a very different dynamic. I appreciate having Vicki and John to



The Action Skulls' latest album, *From a Running Horse* (top), and the trio of (L-R) John Cowsill, Vicki Peterson and Bill Mumy.

"I've probably written close to a thousand songs and people probably really only quickly think, 'Fish Heads.' I can't argue that one, but I certainly wouldn't choose it. I don't know... 'Dying To Be Heard' continues to resonate and interest me. It's a mysterious song and it's rootsy and raw. And I started 'receiving' that lyric while driving on the freeway and it was important enough for me to get off and find the nearest guitar store and sit in a corner playing a dobro I picked up off the wall until I 'found' the progression and proper melody."

transform a rough idea I might have, and I think they enjoy what I bring to their material. A lot of the songs on the new album are collaborations that we worked on together in the same room at the same time. Being in a band that gels is a really great thing. When we are all seeing each other eye to eye, and John's playing drums and Vicki's playing guitar and I'm playing bass or guitar, and we're laying a track down — leakage be damned! Or we're performing onstage — which hasn't happened as much as we'd like for many reasons — and it's grooving and we're all together, that's just a wonderful experience every time it happens the right way. her keep a handle on getting all the parts and the mixes really right is truly a very good thing.

GM: *Is there a leader in Action Skulls?*
BM: No. But I'm the one who pushes to keep making music and get it out. John spent 22 years touring relentlessly with Mike Love's Beach Boys, so he wasn't available to truly be "actively in another group" very much, and then COVID was a global woe that shut down everyone's gigs. So recording and file sharing become the only real way to move forward for quite a while. I pushed aggressively to make that happen. But as far as any "final decisions" go, no, there's no leader. If someone doesn't like something or doesn't want to do something, we don't do it. Vicki is a perfectionist and will hang on to a project before allowing it to be released until she knows we've got it right. And that can frustrate me sometimes as I'm more of a "feel" guy who wants to lay it down as soon as it's fresh and get it out and move on to the next thing. But having

GM: *The entire paradigm of the record industry has been turned upside down in the past 10-15 years. With the Action Skulls working independently from a major record label, A&R suits with strong but often misguided opinions, what are the greatest joys you experience from doing this all on your own and conversely, the most pressing challenges?*
BM: We wish we had a strong promotion team with a decent budget behind us, but we don't. We had a very nice record deal on the table, but it was absolutely contingent on us touring, and I just didn't want to commit to that. I enjoy performing a lot. But I've been on the road and in today's world, committing to a real touring schedule isn't something I'm up for. I'm getting too old for that, and I haven't done it for many years. If you've never stopped being on the road, like John, then getting out there isn't so grueling. But I've got little grandkids now, and I'm just not excited about going out there on the level that Action Skulls realistically would have to do to please a label so they could recoup some money. I know I've let Vicki and John down somewhat in the gigging department, especially since now John's no longer in Mike Love's Beach Boys touring band. But I know myself pretty well. Action Skulls aren't a "known band" in any big sense. If we tour it's not going to be cushy. So, the music that we've recorded together compels us to share it as best we can on our own for now without a label's financial backing for the time being.

GM: *Looking back over decades of songwriting and knowing your answer could change day to day, you can only be remembered by one song you write, what's the song and why?*
BM: I've probably written close to a thousand songs and people probably really only quickly think, "Fish Heads." I can't argue that one, but I certainly wouldn't choose it. I don't know ... "Dying To Be Heard" continues to resonate and interest me. It's a mysterious song and it's rootsy and raw. And I started "receiving" that lyric while driving on the freeway, and it was important enough for me to get off and find the nearest guitar store and sit in a corner playing a dobro I picked up off the wall until I "found" the progression and proper melody. That song, maybe. Songs are like children —you love them all because they grew from within you and they were gifts from the muse. Even when they're not very lovable, you love them all.

GM: *Through the decades, you've had your share of memorable experiences with music royalty. Let's touch base on a few.*
BM: Well, in 1970 I was playing percussion in the recording studio on the late, great John Stewart's *Willard* album being produced by Peter Asher. Two feet to my right was James Taylor playing his Gibson J-50. Carole King was at the session.

James and I smoked a joint together. I played his iconic guitar. The tracks came out great. That was pretty cool.

New Year's Eve 1970 was spent with my girlfriend at the time and her pal, who was dating Phil Everly. Just the four of us. I played his great Gibson Everly Brothers model guitar in his apartment. I have two of those now, "Donald" and "Phillip." Great guitars. That was pretty cool.

Joining Brian Wilson's band onstage to play keyboard and then tambourine, and sing backgrounds on three songs was great. I love Brian. I've hung out with him a lot over the decades, but I honestly don't know if he would really be aware of that.

Of course, I was Shaun Cassidy's rhythm guitar player on his 1978 tour, when he sold like 10 million records in a year and a half. That was really like being in *A Hard Day's Night*, without The Beatles' music. We played sports arenas, and every night 15,000 kids would be screaming through the set. We'd speed off in several different limos after the shows, and Shaun would be hunkered down underneath a blanket. It was wild. Super first class all the way. But that was a truly amazing experience and tour, and a great band. Shaun remains one of my closest friends. We talk almost daily.

I wrote and gigged and recorded with America for decades. Always fun and musical. I've been really close with Dewey and Gerry for 51 years.

I could go on and on, but the best of all was joining Ringo's All-Starrs at the Greek Theater, and playing 12-string and singing on "With a Little Help From My Friends" and "Give Peace a Chance." Steve Lukather has been a super close friend since 1975, and he made that happen. That was turbo Fab.

In 1972 I was a guest at the Aquarius Theater at the party for The Who. *Tommy* opened as a stage play there. The Kinks played a pretty small ballroom party gig there. Ray Davies was elegantly wasted, but he was also brilliant. Keith Moon was the only member of The Who there, and he was the host. Somehow I ended up at the Troubadour in the front booth with

The Lost in Space cast and the Hourglass clown around on the set – in this case a large sea shell used in one of the show's episodes.

"After filming we went to dinner and then the Hourglass played for us!"

Paul, Angela, Billy & Greg talk after the filming for the day.

(Continued from page 23)

day, we all piled into various cars and took off for supper at the Hamburger Hamlet, a sidewalk restaurant one block from the Whisky. The rest of the cast couldn't join us because they were still shooting.

Once at the Hamlet, we met up with Angela's friends, June's three children, and Bob Conrad's daughter Nancy.

I sat myself down next to Angela and we started talking. Angela is now 15 years old, and has hair down to her waist. She wears a wig on the show and it takes an hour to pile all her hair under it!

Although Angela started working on the Danny Thomas Show when she was four, she had even been an active little girl before then!

Angela was born in England, but her dad always wanted to come to America. They finally made the trip shortly after Angela's birth. No sooner did they settle down in America, than a neighbor suggested the folks let Angela and her older sister Veronica do commercials. So, before the ripe old age of four, Angela had a background of various TV commercials and two movies — one with Rock Hudson and one with Paul Newman!

Although Angela appears to be on a pretty heavy schedule by normal standards, it seems she has every intention of becoming busier yet. Not only does she hope to get a recording contract in the near future, but she would also like to go back to England when she becomes 18 to attend acting school there.

Two of the Hourglass now joined us at the table and they started reminiscing about when they all first met. It seems Angela originally met the Hourglass about a year ago in a club called Peppy's in St. Louis while she was doing a nation-wide promotion tour. They were called the Allman Joys then and she had no idea they had come out to California until she saw them at June's party. She recognized them immediately and they had a grand reunion.

We chatted a bit more and before long, we were off to the Whisky. While the Hourglass played, Angela and Billy got up to dance and a great time was had by all! It was the perfect ending to the perfect day.

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A newspaper clipping from the 1960s showing an article on the Hour Glass (featuring the Allman brothers Gregg and Duane) visiting the set of the TV drama *Lost in Space*.

Bill Mumy playing acoustic guitar during one of his shows pre-pandemic.

Keith and Maureen McCormick from *The Brady Bunch*, and a few other folks who I can't remember now. Drinking brandy with Keith Moon. Gadzooks!

The last gig I played was the Lovin' Spoonful reunion at the Alex Theater on February 29, 2020. It's a beautiful theater, and it was packed. About two thousand people. I sang and played John Sebastian's "Darlin' Companion," which is a great Spoonful track that's got a rockabilly groove. Elliot Easton was with me, and he played the late great Zal Yanovsky's guitar part. Dave Pearlman added pedal steel. And the one and only John Sebastian stood next to me and fingerpicked along. John has always been a hero and inspiration to me. Playing alongside him and getting to know him was really wonderful. You can't find a nicer guy on the planet. For me, that was a big one and for now... still the last time I gigged.

HENRY DILTZ

GM: *You've been writing songs for almost 60 years. What are the lessons you have learned that you wished you knew at the beginning?*

BM: Actually, I wish I could unlearn a lot about writing and get back to that innocence; no rules, pure inspiration-type writing at the beginning. Before you'd think, "This needs a bridge." I stopped "trying to write songs" about 30 years ago. Unless I'm asked or hired to write one for a specific reason. And I've learned *never* to ask the muse to pause. I can always "feel" when a song or a lyric or a progression or a riff is "on its way," and no matter what is happening at that moment, if I'm three quarters asleep, if I'm with company, etc., I will get up and be open to receive that gift and do my best to see it through to wherever it goes.

GM: *Vinyl has made a huge comeback. Do you collect vinyl? Where do you stand on the CD versus vinyl versus download debate?*

BM: Well, I don't collect vinyl, but I also never got rid of my old LPs, so I have literally hundreds and hundreds of albums. I personally like CDs for the size and the convenience and the scratchlessness and the ease of fast forwarding, etc. My cars have CD players in them, and I always make CDs of what I think may be final mixes, and drive around and listen in the car to get a different perspective on the mixes. You can't do that with vinyl. I miss LP-size packages for being able to read liner notes and see photos well. I definitely like physical. But I don't miss getting up to pick up the stylus or turn an album over. So, I guess I'll say CD.

GM: *What's the rarest record you own?*

BM: I don't know. Beatles Vee Jay? I have a lot of old LPs and 45s. I really don't

know what's especially rare. I haven't kept up on that stuff at all, but I started buying records in 1959, so... I may have some that are rare and quite collectible that I'm not aware of. I guess I should ask Doctor Demento about that. Of course, he broke Barnes & Barnes' "Fish Heads" back in the day. He's got an amazing record collection. Great guy.

GM: *What's your most prized piece of music memorabilia?*
BM: I have several personal autographs signed to me that I cherish. George Harrison, Bob Dylan and others. I really appreciate the fact that I have a cocktail glass from Capitol Records given to Dave Guard, the original leader of The Kingston Trio, and a huge inspiration to me when I started to be a musician. It's engraved to Dave commemorating the 1959 *Here We Go Again!* Trio album being a million seller. Dave Guard's son, Tom, gifted that to me.

I suppose my memories are my most prized memorabilia.

GM: *What's left on your bucket list as an artist/musician?*
BM: Bucket list? Gadzooks! Continuing to make music that is genuinely inspired and hopefully enjoyed by others as well as by myself. Maybe making a few more films that are decent. I'm pretty happy hanging at home sitting in my chair strumming an acoustic guitar with my dog at my side. I'd like to keep doing that for a long time.

MORE ON BILL MUMY:
www.billmumy.com

Bill Mumy's solo CDs are available from gragroup.com, Amazon, streaming , downloads and YouTube.

His new 450-page autobiography, *Danger, Will Robinson: The Full Mumy,* and two *Lost (and Found) in Space* books penned with cast member/friend Angela Cartwright can be ordered (signed and unsigned) at ncpbooks.com, Amazon and other online sites.

New and previous Action Skulls albums are currently streaming everywhere. The band's first album, *Angels Hear,* is available on CD through Amazon.

MUMY'S BEST

Bill Mumy's five most memorable gigs he attended in the 1960s

AS TOLD TO KEN SHARP

THE KINGSTON TRIO at Melodyland Theatre in Anaheim. I was a big folkie fan as a kid, and the Trio was my favorite band. My best pal Scott was really into them, too. We went to this 1967 gig and in between songs, John Stewart of the Trio announced "Billy Mumy from *Lost in Space* is in the audience. Billy, come backstage after the show." I was blown away. Those guys were heroes to me. Scott and I hung with all three of them, had 7UPS and within a few years time, John Stewart was mentoring my band, Redwood, and we were opening for him whenever he gigged in Southern California.

THE NEWPORT POP FESTIVAL (1968) I was among the 100,000 to attend the festival. Steppenwolf, Iron Butterfly and other classic '60s bands played, but I went there mainly to see The Byrds. I was not disappointed. The four Byrds that night were Roger McGuinn, Chris Hillman, Clarence White and drummer Kevin Kelley. It was inspiring!

HOUR GLASS In 1967, June Lockhart hired the Hour Glass, led by Duane and Gregg Allman, to play a party. They also visited the set of *Lost in Space* and hung out for an afternoon. Then, they played the Whisky with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, and June brought me and Angela Cartwright to their gig. My first time at the Whisky. Great photo {below} of Ange, Duane and me in the dressing room. I'm wearing Nehru. I was talking to Duane about guitars. He was much more interested in Angela.

Robert Haimer and I — we became Barnes & Barnes and brought you "Fish Heads" and nine albums — got in line early and had front-row seats for this great Doors concert, which was recorded for their *Absolutely Live* album. I took a photo of Morrison onstage (above). It's rare to see a pic of him during a gig where he's looking into a camera lens. The following year, I had a short but interesting chat with him in the elevator of the 9000 building on the Sunset Strip.

THE DOORS at the Aquarius, July 1969.

CROSBY, STILLS, NASH & YOUNG There are countless other classic gigs I saw between '67 and '70, but I do think the best of them all was Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young with Joni Mitchell opening for them at the Greek Theater in 1969. Pure magic. Joni was radiant with a solo acoustic performance, then CSNY played acoustically together and individually, and then came out for an electric set with rhythm section and kicked ass. Before drugs changed the dynamic of it all. They were astonishingly great.

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[JERSEY BOYS | FROM PAGE 54]

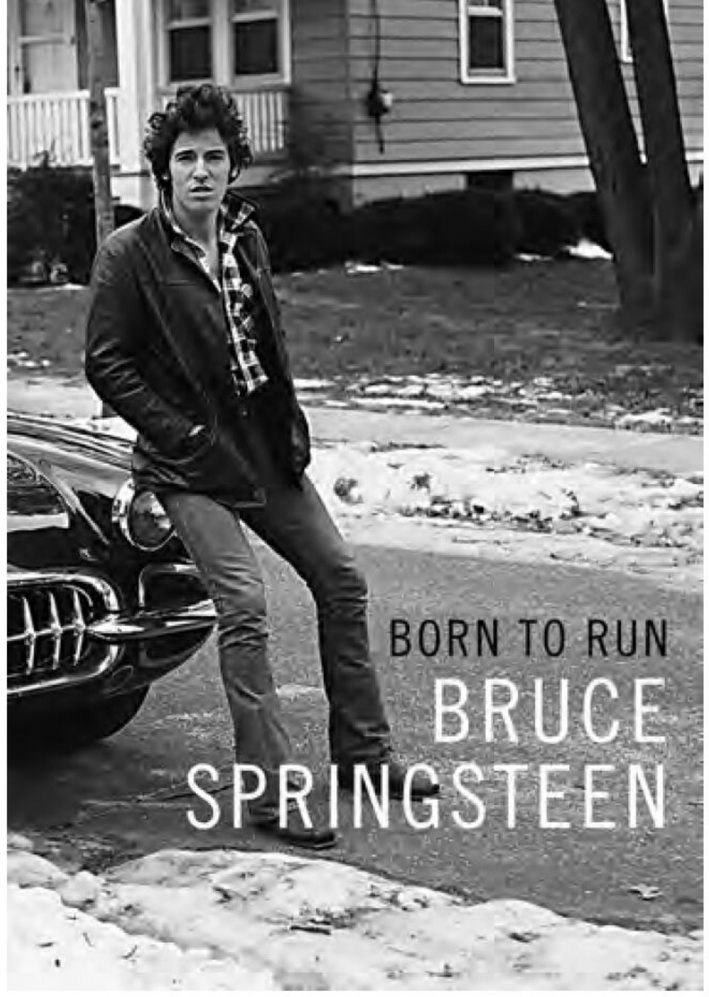
so that keeps me happy. And if there's a Springsteen concert and I say, "Hey, can I come over?" and they say yes, well, I'm happy doing that, too. I run two businesses. I have a brokerage business where I sell, believe it or not, charcoal. I represent a very nice company in this marketplace. And I sell it to the food service distributors, and I sell a lot of it, 150 to 200 trailer loads a year, give or take. So that's one business that I run from my office here, and then I also run my photography business where I monitor the sales from the galleries around the world that represent me. So, it keeps me busy, and it keeps me going.

GM: *I think it's great that you haven't pegged your entire career just on your Bruce Springsteen photos and the album covers you did for him; you still find things that inspire you. That's great.*

FS: Well, as long as they're going to keep paying me, I'm going to keep taking the dough.

GM: *I have a couple of last band questions. You wrote about this in your book, and it's very obvious that the band wasn't just a band, the band was more like a family, or a group of brothers. Does that dynamic still exist today? Are they still like that?*

FS: Yeah, more or less. Bruce made a comment in his book, *Born to Run*, which I was happy to have shot the cover photo for. He made a statement and said that when he was searching for bandmates, he didn't want the best musicians, he wanted the *right* musicians. These guys, especially Steven Van Zandt, Garry [Tallent], Nils [Lofgren], Max [Weinberg] and The Professor [Roy Bittan] have been there for a long time. Clarence [Clemons] had died off and Danny Federici had died off. Those losses meant a lot to Bruce; they hit him hard. Those guys were part of him, part of his family. He's very close to them, although they all have their own lives. Steven, my God, he is into so many things. It's not even funny with this. You know, he really supports the music and education and the educational curriculum for music



and so many different charities and organizations that he works with. Plus, his own Disciples of Soul, which is one kick-ass band. I photographed them recently at a function at Monmouth University, at their induction into The Bruce Springsteen Archives and Center for American Music's inaugural American Music Honors. It was Steven, Sam Moore, Darlene Love and Steve Earle. They had The Disciples of Soul there, and it was kick-ass! Darlene came out with The Disciples of Soul and did a mean version of Ike and Tina's "River Deep—Mountain High."

GM: *The last question I had for you was in your book, you said you couldn't look at Bruce the same in 1982 as you did in 1978. How did you look at him in 1985 when it all exploded? Did it change again?*

FS: In my book, *Bruce Springsteen—Further Up the Road,* which I did in 2017 and is a gigantic book. It carries all the photographs I have ever done from 1978 to at least 2017. And it's a monster book. And we have a lot of additional material in it. And I mentioned that he has evolved. And that person — although he has the germ of the person that was back then — is a whole lot more to be respected, to be honored. Like I said earlier in this conversation, he's just self-educated, he has blossomed way beyond what he was. I knew back then that he was going to be great. I had no idea of how great he was going to become, and I'm just in awe of it, you know?

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15. Extent and Nature of Circulation.	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Numbers of Copies (Net press run)	9,539	7,910
b. Paid Circulation (by Mail and Outside Mail)		
1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541	5,826	5,656
2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on Form 3541:	0	0
3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales and Other Non-USPS Paid Distribution:	601	0
4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS:	333	139
c. Total Paid Distribution [sum of 15b. 1), 2), 3), and 4)]:	6,760	5,795
d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (by Mail or Outside Mail)		
1) Outside-County as Stated on Form 3541:	68	66
2) In-County as Stated on Form 3541:	0	0
3) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS:	0	0
4) Outside the Mail:	741	1,269
e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution [sum of 15d. 1), 2), 3), and 4)]:	809	1,335

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation. (Cont.)	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
f. Total Distribution '(Sum of 15c. And 15e.)	7,569	7,130
g. Copies not Distributed:	1,970	780
h.Total (sum of 15f. and g.)	9,539	7,910
Percent Paid (15c. divided by 15f. times 100):	89.3%	81.3%
16. If total circulation includes electronic copies, report that circulation on lines below.		
a. Paid Electronic Copies		
b. Total Paid Print Copies (15c)+ Paid Electronic Copies (16a)	6,760	5,795
c. Total Print Distribution (15f) + Paid Electronic Copies (16a)	7,569	7,130
d. Percent Paid (Both Print + Electronic Copies) (16b divided by 16c x 100)	89.3%	81.3%

I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above a nominal price.

17. Publication of this statement will be printed in the Winter 2023 issue of this publication.
18. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties). James Welch, Chief Operating Officer, 10/1/2023 04:10:22 PM.

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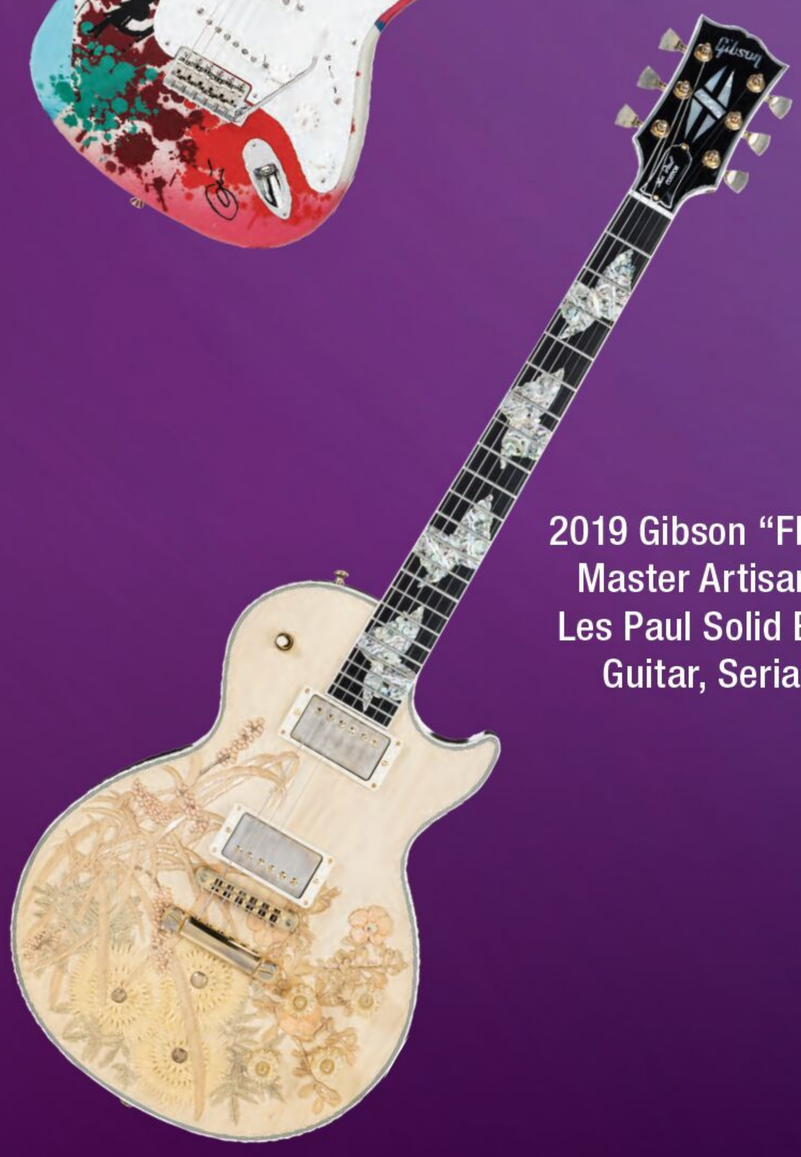

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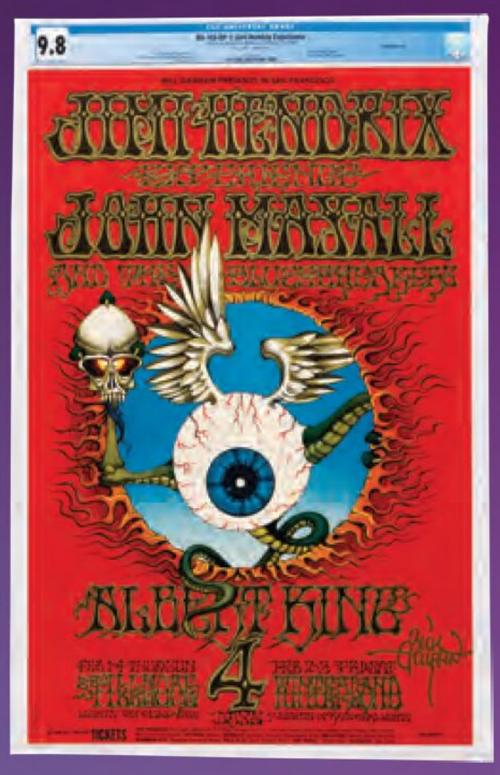

BG-105 Jimi Hendrix 1968 “Flying Eyeball” Concert Poster Signed by Rick Griffin, Graded 9.8
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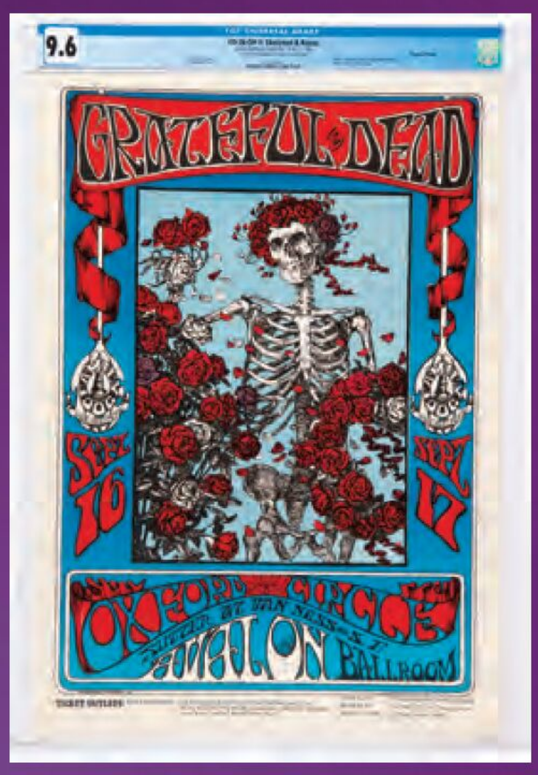

FD-26 Grateful Dead 1966 “Skeleton & Roses” Concert Poster Graded 9.6
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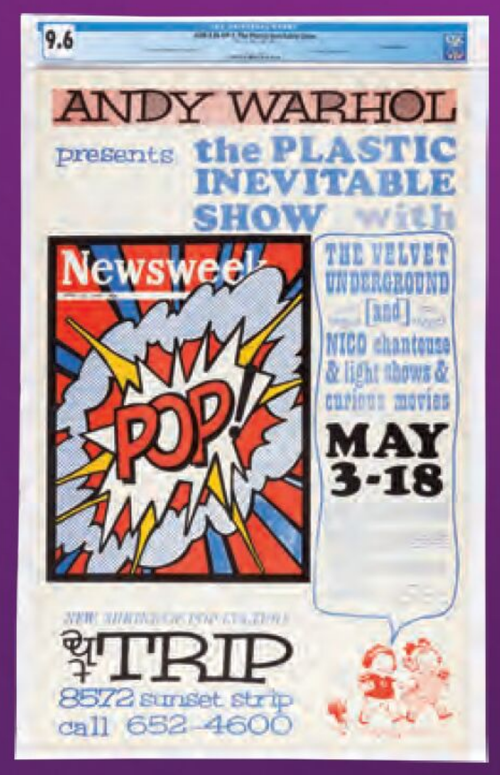

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